

Yerr Wetimbi yi Yerr Marrgu

Old Way & New Way

**KIEREN KARRITPUL
+ PATRICIA MARFURRA**

30 MARCH TO 4 MAY 2019
THE CROSS ART PROJECTS

Proudly presented
in collaboration with Merrepen Arts



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Exhibition Catalogue

Published in conjunction with:

'Yerr Wetimbi yi Yerr Marrgu' – Old Way & New Way

Kieren Karritpul + Patricia Marfurra

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Cover image: Kieren Karritpul,
"Sun Mat", 102.5 x 110.5 cm,
acrylic on linen, 2019

www.crossart.com.au

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About the Exhibition

The foundation for the exhibition **Yerr Wetimbi yi Yerr Marrgu/Old Way & New Way** is deceptively simple: linguist and artist/weaver Patricia Marfurra has made a huge and magical woven fishnet which Kieren Karritpul translates into delicate abstract paintings. The "old way and new way" working relationship between mother and son however reveals a shared commitment to sustainability and community. Patricia Marfurra and Kieren Karritpul's woven and painted tributes honour the teachings of their ancestors and demonstrate the way strong cultural connections in daily life can be maintained.

Kieren Karritpul and Patricia Marfurra are recognised Ngen'gi wumirri artists from Nauiyu Nambiyu, a small community on the Daly River about three hours south-west of Darwin. In this river valley there is no escaping the woven lines of inspiration and connection. The woven form of the Merrepen palm is both subject and metaphor for

process and community. Yerrgi is the Daly River word (Ngan'gikurrungurr language) for the pandanus plant, the Screw Palm, Pandanus Spiralis which together with the Sand Palm (merrepen, Livistona Humilis) are the main sources of fibre for Top End weavers.

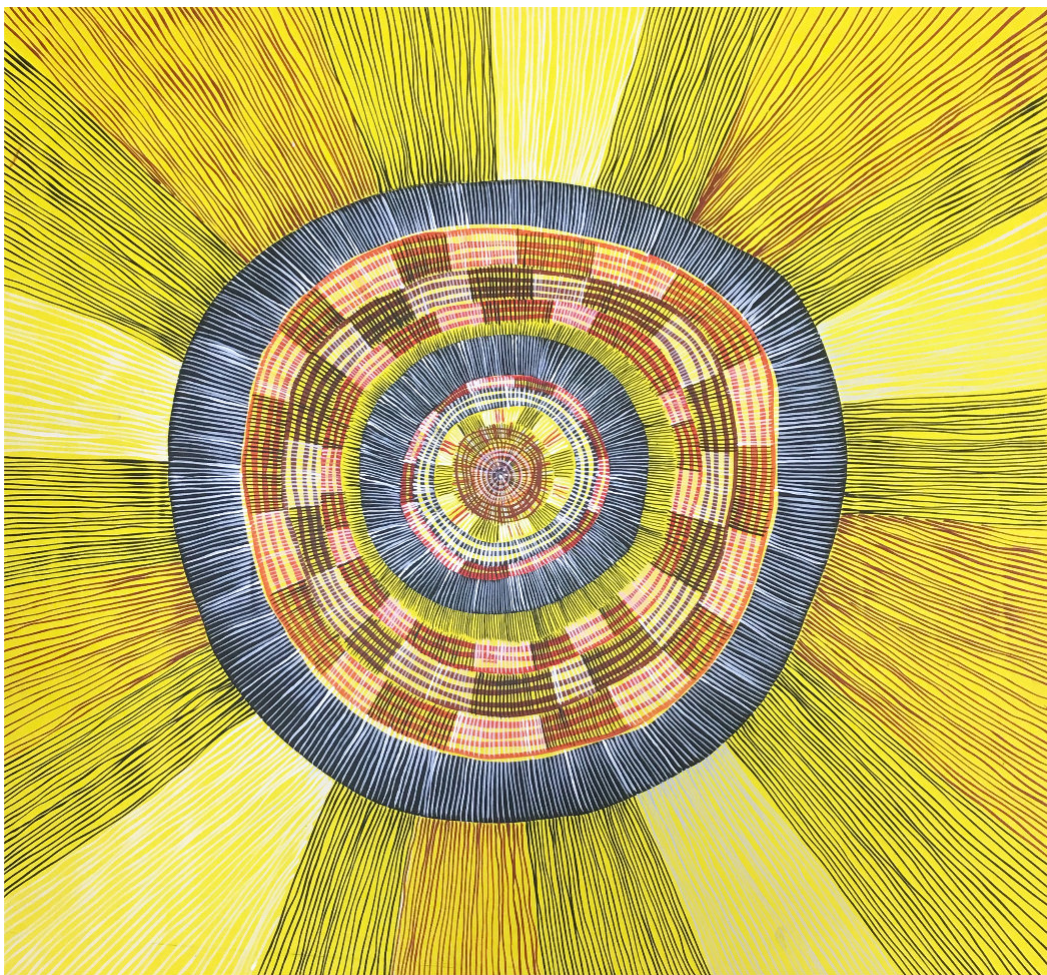
The artists invite us to share this inter-generational communication and exchange. The exhibition's pièce de résistance is Patricia Marfurra's handwoven net, traditionally used by older women to collect fish and turtles. In Kieren Karritpul's paintings and textiles the fishnet is a reoccurring motif – each painted line echoing a woven line. As a young man, Kieren watched his mother, grandma and other older women fishing in a billabong where kids catch fish or barramundi. Today he applies this keen gaze to his artwork and hunting.

Writing the catalogue essay for Kieren Karritpul's debut exhibition at Nomad Arts in Darwin in 2015, the astute art historian Maurice O'Riordan described the lineage of Top End artists who give form to woven objects through the two-dimensional medium of painting. O'Riordan cites Nauiyu on Daly River and nearby Peppimenarti art communities in particular (pioneered by Regina Wilson and the late

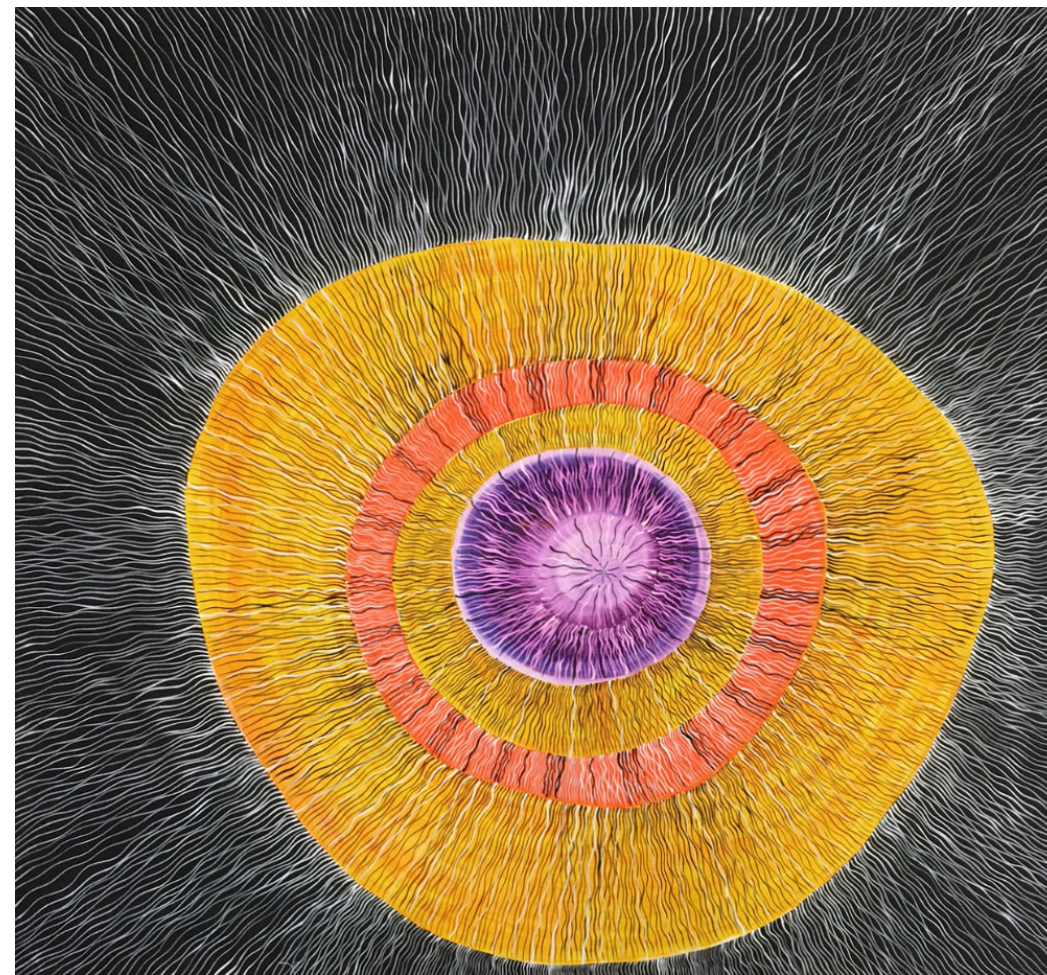
Patsy Marrfura), Arnhem Land artists such as Kate Miwulku (Maningrida) and Robyn Djunginy (Ramingining) and Darwin-based artist Karen Mills's "minimalist musings on this theme through painterly abstraction". It is this grand tradition that Kieren Karritpul and Patricia Marfurra delight in and draw strength from. It is also now one of contemporary Australian art's great themes.

The communal process of gathering and preparing the pandanus fibres is an opportunity to pass on 'old stories' and cultural knowledge. The traditional owners are also worried about the Northern Territory government's policy of issuing long-term water licences to extract very large amounts of water from the aquifers which feed the Daly, Katherine and Roper Rivers, without a water allocation plan in place. As the old and the new cross over, it is time to shift our conversations to what we can and are doing to conserve traditional botanical knowledge and water resources in the face of global climate collapse.

Jo Holder
Director, The Cross Art Projects



KIEREN KARRITPUL
SUN MAT
102.5 X 110.5 CM
ACRYLIC ON LINEN
2019



KIEREN KARRITPUL
FISH NET 1
ACRYLIC ON LINEN
112.5 X 125 CM
2019
(#10022)



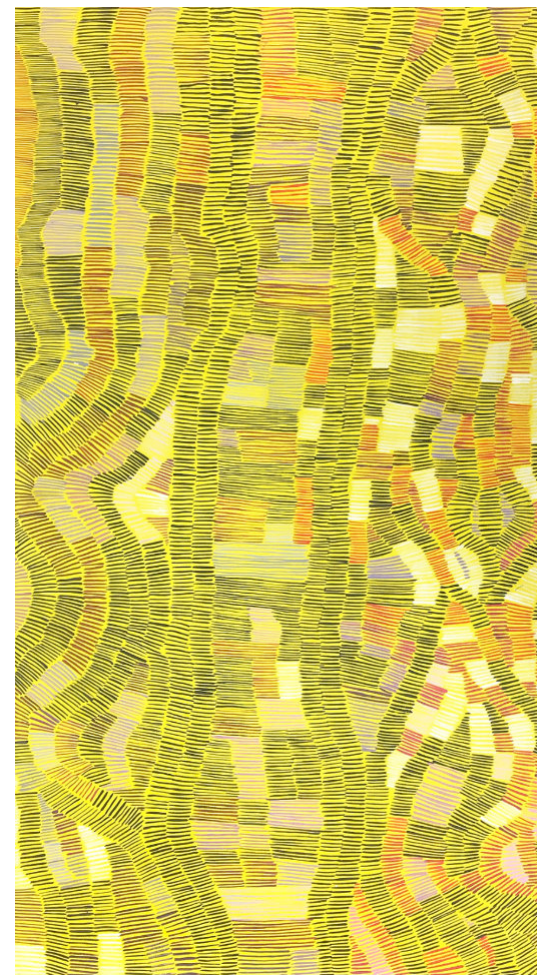
KIEREN KARRITPUL
MERREPEN YERRGI - MAT
206 X 178 CM
ACRYLIC ON LINEN
2019
(#10016)



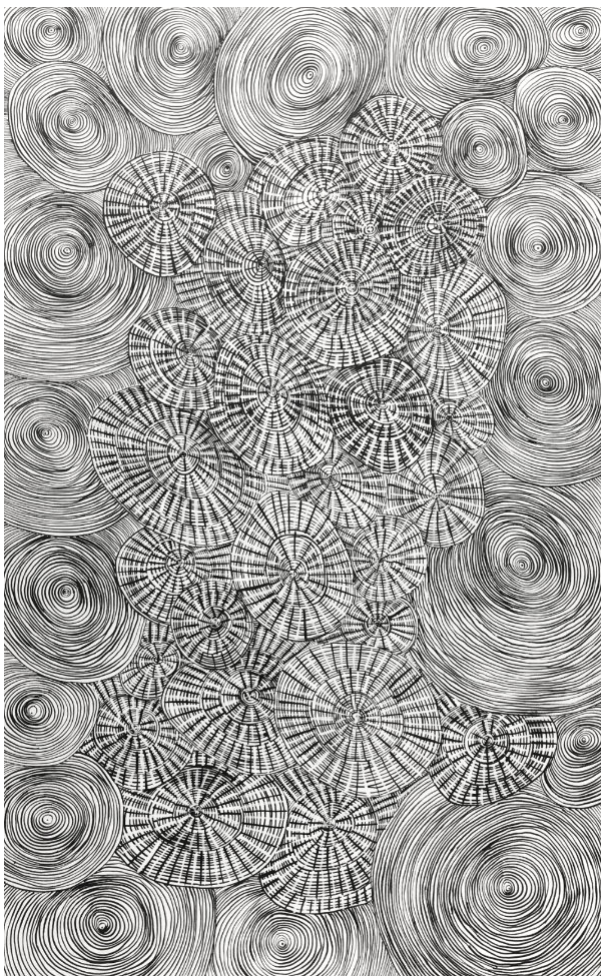
KIEREN KARRITPUL
WAUIPAN 2
ACRYLIC ON LINEN
124 X 104 CM
2019
(#10015)



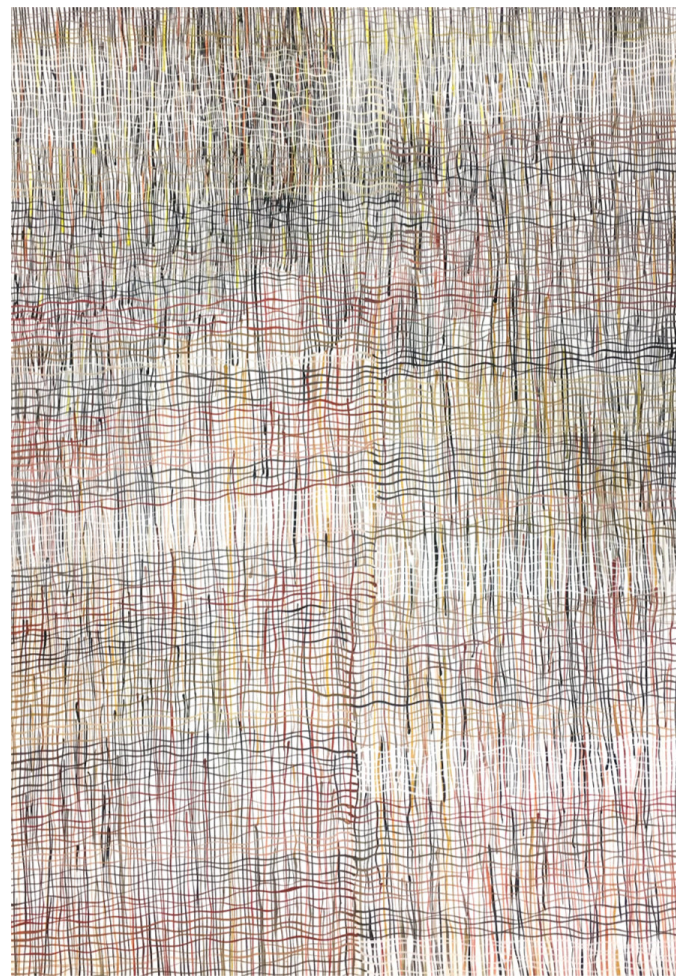
KIEREN KARRITPUL
SUN MAT 3
127.5 X 83 CM
ACRYLIC ON LINEN
2019
(#10013)



KIEREN KARRITPUL
FISH NET 2
ACRYLIC ON LINEN
127.5 X 71 CM
2019
(#10010)



KIEREN KARRITPUL
YENGIPUTJIME – FIRE DREAMING
129.5 X 79 CM
ACRYLIC ON LINEN
2019
(#10004)



KIEREN KARRITPUL
WEAVING
ACRYLIC ON LINEN
127.5 X 89.5 CM
2019
(#10005)



KIEREN KARRITPUL
FIGHTING STICKS – MAGULIFI
127.5 X 55 CM
ACRYLIC ON LINEN
2019
(#10004)



PATRICIA MARFURRA
FISING NET – WALUPAN
HAND WOVEN AND NATURALLY
DYED MERREPEN PALM
2.1 X 1.2 METRES
2019



PATRICIA MARFURRA
DILLY BAGS, BASKET & EARRINGS
HAND WOVEN AND NATURALLY
DYED MERREPEN PALM
2019
OPPOSITE PAGE

PATRICIA MARFURRA
BASKET (DETAIL)
HAND WOVEN AND NATURALLY
DYED MERREPEN PALM
2019
LEFT

PATRICIA MARFURRA
EARRINGS (1 OF 8 SETS)
HAND WOVEN AND NATURALLY
DYED MERREPEN PALM
2019
RIGHT

About the Artists



Kieren Karritpul

In 2015 Karritpul won ‘Highly Commended, Youth’ at the 32nd National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards and in 2014 he won the Youth Award at the 31st NATSIAA at the Museum and Art Gallery Northern Territory. His artwork is in the collections of National Gallery of Australia, Museum and Art Gallery Northern Territory, Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences (MAAS), Sydney and the Museum of Cultural History, Norway.

Sources: Merrepen Arts, Nomad Arts, NATSIAA.



Patricia Marfurra (McTaggart), AM

Patricia was a founder of the Women’s Centre in 1986 (now Merrepen Arts Centre) and Merrepen Arts, Language and Culture Aboriginal Corporation (founded 1992). She holds an Advanced Diploma in Linguistics and has worked with the University of New England on the [Ngan’gikurunggur](#) and [Ngen’giwumirri Dictionary](#) (with Nicholas Reid, 2008). She has collaborated with Glenn Wightman of Parks and Wildlife Commission (NT) on books of Ethnobotany from the Daly River area and [Malak Malak and Matngala Plants and Animals](#) published by Department of Land Resources Management and Merrepen Arts in 2014. She was awarded an Australia Medal for her services to the community documenting language and ethnobotany in the Daly River area. Merrepen Arts can be contacted for copies of these publications.

About Merrepen Arts

Merrepen Arts at Nauiyu Nambiyu sits in a small Aboriginal community of around 450 residents located in the valley next to the Daly River. The main language groups of the artists are Ngan’gikurunggurr and Ngen’giwumirri.

Merrepen Art Centre began as a Women’s Centre in 1986 with Merrepen Arts, Language and Culture Aboriginal Corporation founded in 1992. To recognise the founding women the name Merrepen was chosen. Merrepen comes from Livistonia Palm (commonly known as the cabbage-tree palm), a heraldic and iconic plant that flourishes on the banks of the Daly River and is collected by women for weaving dilly bags, mats and fishnets. The centre is renowned for strong, contemporary design that stresses ecology and the natural environment applied to a range of media (painting, printmaking, textile design and weaving). Works often reflect the landscape of surrounding hills, spectacular wetlands and billabongs, with an abundant supply of bush tucker including barramundi.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

The Cross Art Projects
www.crossart.com.au

Merrepen Arts
www.merrepenarts.com.au

ANKA
www.ankaaa.org.au

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