

JOHN PRINCE SIDDON



ARTHOUSE
GALLERY

X
MANGKAJA



John Prince Siddon – Tarnanthi 2021
Art Gallery of South Australia
Photograph by Saul Steed

JOHN PRINCE SIDDON

Our Mother Tongue

Melbourne Art Fair – Booth K4

22 – 25 February 2024

Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre, South Wharf

The extraordinary work of John Prince Siddon is a physical experience as much as a visual one, where the traditions of Indigenous and Contemporary art shift and transform into Prince's unique motifs, stories and mark making that transport us into his world.

Possessing an iconic energy that feels familiar to rock stars, rebel cowboys and beatniks, Prince's work is a poetry of visuals challenging the way we see the Australian landscape. Often painting while watching the news, his work depicts the latest in culture, current affairs and global concerns with the Narrangkarni (Dreamtime) and desert imagery interweaving in his work.

One of the most expressive bodies of work to hallmark the collective contemporary Indigenous art movement, Prince stands as one of Australia's most influential artists ... Strong and pertinent pieces, Prince's works are brimming with passion, pattern, colour, and exuberance. – Jack Wilkie-Jans, Aboriginal Affairs Advocate, Artist & Artswoker

A proud Walmajarri man and Chairman of Mangkaja Arts in Fitzroy Crossing, West Kimberly, Prince grew up with an artist father, Pompey Siddon, who was one of the founders of Mangkaja Arts. A stockman in his youth, Prince turned to art after losing his leg in a horse riding accident and while the centre provides essential artist materials and mediums, Prince works independently in the rooms of an assisted living facility where his wife lives; wanting to be close to her while he works is essential to his practice.

The preservation of Culture for future generations is of great concern and focus to him and his family. Issues affecting his community such as floods, domestic violence, loss of animal life, the threat of climate change and the destruction of cultural history are painted with an acidic colour palette seeped in psychedelia and electric energy.

As varied as his palette, so too are the materials he uses to create his work. Working on canvas, oil drums, satellite dishes, kangaroo pelts, 3D printed bullock skulls, boab nuts, feathers and wood, Prince's work is in his own words 'all mixed up'; there are no rules or limits to his creative endeavours, instead all is a conduit for his artistic expression.

Throughout this new body of work, the notion of 'all mixed up' flows into the concepts behind paintings such as *We All Own The Land*, *Our Ancestors* and *Butterfly Dance*, where spiders, kangaroos, locusts, fish, swans, dogs and horses all play a part in facilitating the growth and health of the landscape; and each other. Merging, intermingling, interweaving and conversing on the canvas, wildlife and insects work together.

Spiders helping out weaving, green locusts, all next-door neighbours, same Country – John Prince Siddon

While his works express a vitality, playfulness and whimsy, there is an interesting underlying tension in his work, where animals crawl over each other, figures appear in mid fight and the social and political subjects come together in what acclaimed critic John McDonald describes as 'a squirming, fecund view of a world in which everything threatens to eat everything else'. This is the very nature of life, and Prince has managed to capture it through his dynamic work.

Arthouse Gallery is thrilled to present this ground-breaking exhibition 'Mother Tongue' from John Prince Siddon at the Melbourne Art Fair 2024 alongside works commissioned by Cement Fondu and with the support of Mangkaja Arts, a non-profit, Indigenous owned and governed centre in the West Kimberley regions of Western Australia. They are innovators, as well as artistic and cultural leaders.

John Prince Siddon has been a finalist in the Sulman Prize at the Art Gallery of New South Wales (2023), The Fisher's Ghost Art Award (2022) and the Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards (NATSIAA) at the Museum and Art Gallery Northern Territory (2021, 2020, 2019, 2018). He was also a featured artist at the Tarnanthi 2021 festival at the Art Gallery of South Australia. His solo exhibition 'All Mixed Up' at the Fremantle Arts Centre, presented in conjunction with the Perth Festival 2020, was heralded as the 'stand-out exhibition' of the festival by John McDonald of the Sydney Morning Herald. In 2022, the Art Gallery of New South Wales commissioned paintings from Prince for the opening of the Sydney Modern Project exhibition 'Dreamhome: Stories of Art and Shelter'. In March 2024, he will have a major exhibition with Cement Fondu, 'Disco Dreamtime Drums'. His works are included in the collections of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Art Gallery of South Australia and Artbank.

Old Fella and the Satellite

acrylic on metal satellite dish with bullock skull on stand

129 x 88 x 90 cm

\$9,900



*That old fella don't know how to use the satellite.
Didn't know much about it.
Never seen a UFO or alien.
But he seen something going past.
He saw that comet coming (Halley's Comet).
Some old people thought it was the end of the world.
It scared them.*

*These days we got satellite to track anybody.
Satellite to track our fish, stealing fish from our sea.
They are like the spider web, the connection between satellites.
The blue stuff is telling people, tracking people where they are these days.
Tracking anybody.*

*Wish that old fella woulda been alive to tell 'em 'That Halley's Comet'.
Old people passed away not knowing what was that light.*



Pulkartu Dreaming
acrylic on canvas
120 x 120 cm
\$7,500

Salon des Refusés
Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards
10 – 20 August 2023
Outstation Gallery

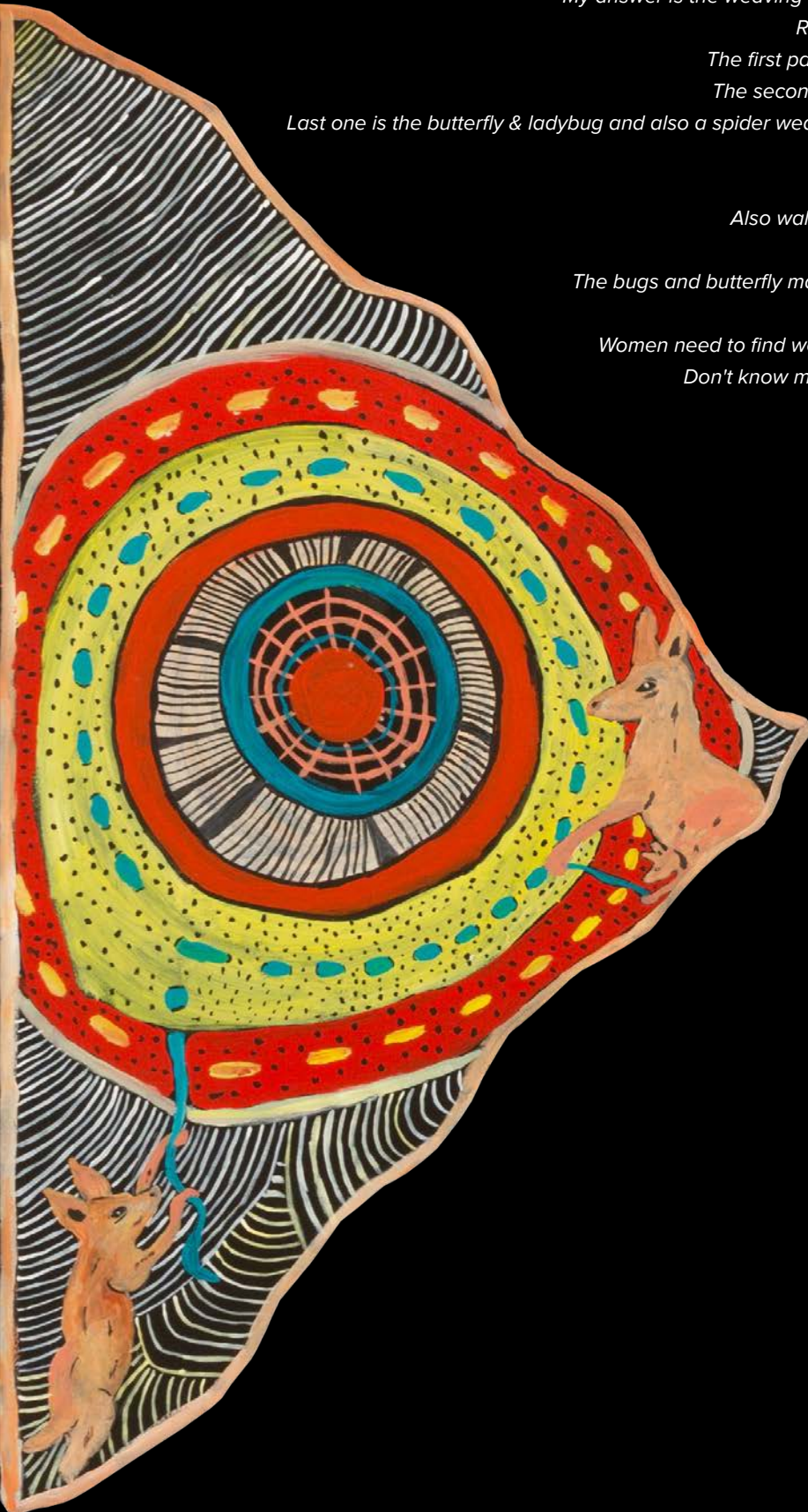


Spider wow are danger.
The bite can put you in hospital, but if you leave them alone in peace, you'll be fine.
What amaze me is the webs.
The patterns when they do webs.

Look carefully close up, see what I mean.
Most webs are different shape, some large, some small, but the pattern they make, wow, it will blow you away.
I know the webs use for trap small flying insect.
To my mind I see it, great pattern arts.
Webs done by a deadly insect, the spider.

What made me do this painting of animals and insects weaving together patterns?
My answer is the weaving women do, making basket made of long, fine, soft grass.
Remind me of fine web art when spider do webs spinning.
The first painting is a moth weaving a fish out of string of soft grass.
The second is wallabies weaving a basket also made of soft grass.
Last one is the butterfly & ladybug and also a spider weaving a large kangaroo which got trap in a spinning web.

Many patterns you'll find in bush like spider webs.
Also wallabies make tracks with his or her paws, tails and hands.
Make pattern in the sand.
The bugs and butterfly make weaves and flower pretty because the colour match.
Our people, our great great grandma do weaving too.
Women need to find wet tree branch to get soft grass, then dry it out in the sun.
Don't know much about women doing weaving, it's a secret they kept.



Web Art

acrylic on canvas

120 x 120 cm

\$8,900

Commissioned by Art Gallery of New South Wales

There's a spider in our toilet seat.

Help you hear tourist yelling.

They head off, yeah.

They deadly, yeah.

But look at the bright side.

These god deadly insect.



Russian Why Bomb Hospital Small Farms
acrylic on canvas
120 x 120 cm
\$8,900

Fisher's Ghost Art Award 2022, Finalist
Campbelltown Arts Centre
29 October – 9 December 2022

Sir John Sulman Prize 2023, Finalist
Art Gallery of New South Wales
6 May – 3 September 2023



Enough is Enough
acrylic on canvas
120 x 120 cm
\$8,900



Marlu, Red Kangaroo
acrylic on 44 gallon drums
87.5 x 58 x 58 cm
\$7,990
Commissioned by Cement Fondu, 2024

*Many stories with Marlu.
We believe in our gods.
Many song about big red.
It's a secret song for men.
Everytime anyone paint, you see kangaroo there.*



Stole Beer

acrylic on 44 gallon drums

87.5 x 58 x 58 cm

\$7,990

Commissioned by Cement Fondu, 2024

We like drinking beer after work.

Emu the best.

During flood, our small pub got rob.

Young kinds go out with stolen boat just to steal beer while flood going down.

It's sad.

Many time.

This been going on many time back then.



Bring Back Memories

acrylic on 44 gallon drums

87.5 x 58 x 58 cm

\$7,990

Commissioned by Cement Fondu, 2024

*I did mix it with bird, Agro.
Growing up, seeing the show on TV.*

Where are they now?

Mix it up with all type of fish pattern.

The drum look good when I mix it.



Eating From Tree Vine
acrylic on 44 gallon drums
87.5 x 58 x 58 cm
\$7,990
Commissioned by Cement Fondu, 2024

*Its a B tree.
Rats King go out eating fruit at night.
Some hang side to side in moonlight.
Night King Rat.*



Dreamtime Disco Drums

acrylic on eight 44 gallon drums

installation dimensions variable, 87.5 x 58 x 58 cm each

\$50,000

Commissioned by Cement Fondu, 2024

'Disco Dreamtime Drums'

16 March – 5 May 2024

Cement Fondu



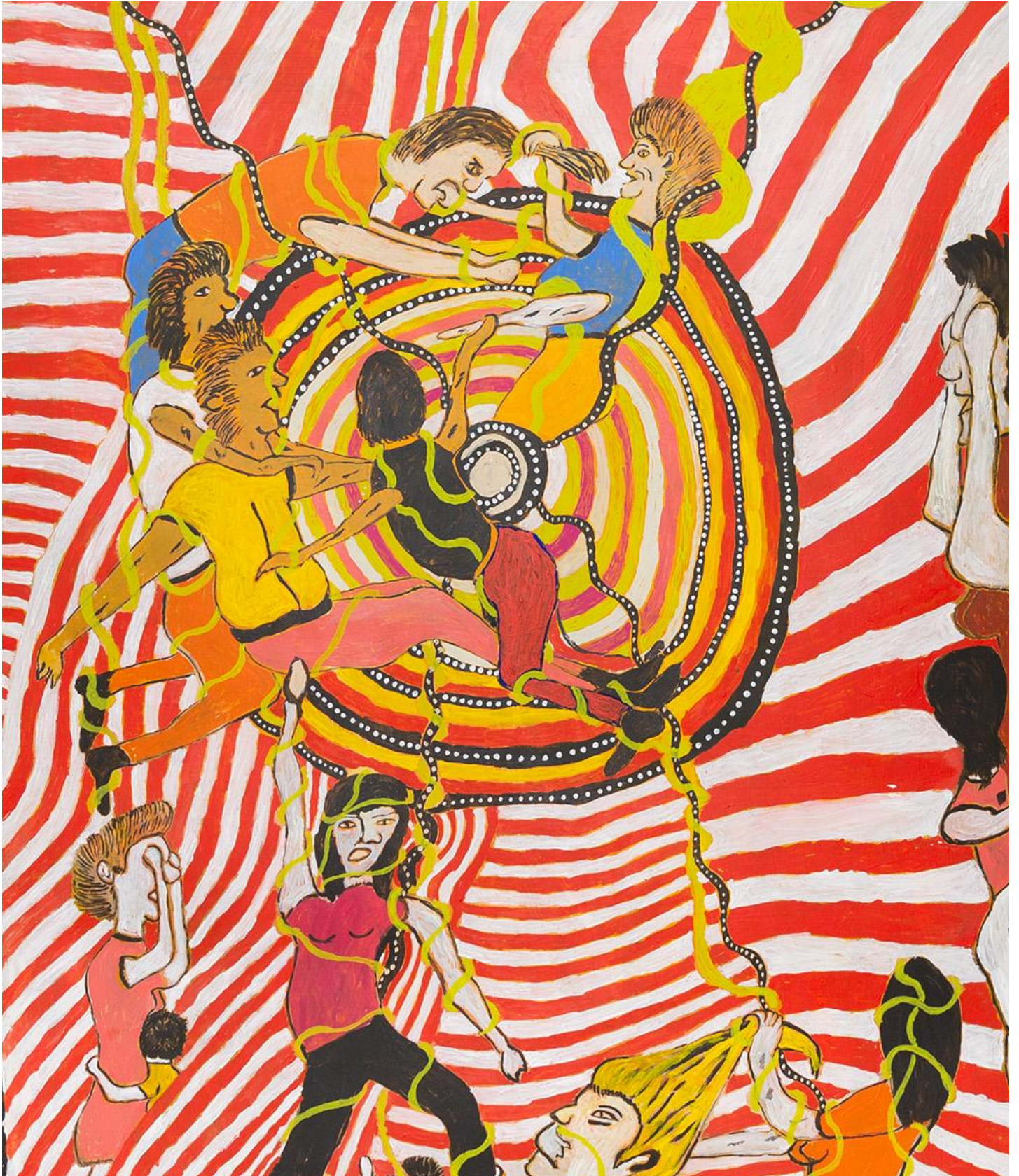
One Punch Mob
acrylic on leather and bullock skull with wood, artificial flowers and feathers
180 x 113 x 38 cm
\$14,000

Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander Art Awards 2019, Finalist
10 August – 3 November 2019
Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory



*The work is about power; I can still hear women screaming.
Little kids crying, women ending up in hospital, they have no body to mind them while their mum is in hospital badly hurt.
You see them on TV news, those one punch victims.
Ends up badly, one punch can kill you!*

In this work John Prince Siddon airing his concerns around domestic violence and violence in Australia more widely.
This work is not related to any particular race, it's about people that fight using one punch.
In some ways it talks about the 'king hits' that we see on TV and in others it reflects on issues closer to home.



Stranded Sheep (above)
acrylic on skull
52 x 64 x 34 cm
\$5,500



Skull – Butterfly I (below)
acrylic on skull with feathers
50 x 60 x 30 cm
\$5,500



Pulkartu (Spider)
acrylic on 3D print
50 x 50 x 18 cm
\$5,500

*Feed on prey passing beetles other spider when they outdoors toilets few people got bitten by this spider.
You get a headache and cramps there is no need to panic only swelling but get treatment quick and fast.
Never use your hands when hiding something under a hole pipe that's where they hide.
The only thing I love about red backs is their webs just like art; the web pattern.*

Pulkartu (Spider) is a brave foray into technologically assisted printmaking. His painted bull skull has been scanned, modelled and 3D printed with his original markings forming an embossed layer on the surface. Prince then finishes the sculpture with acrylic paint retracing some of his marks and inventing others. By embracing futuristic technology Prince challenges traditional notions of Indigenous painting.



Pulkartu (Spider)
acrylic on 3D print
50 x 50 x 18 cm
\$5,500







Stingray Food
acrylic on kangaroo pelt
167 x 97 cm
\$5,500



Any Fish (Gubbi)

acrylic on kangaroo pelt

166 x 100 cm

\$5,500



Feeding Time
acrylic on kangaroo pelt
175 x 82 cm
\$5,500



Weather
acrylic on kangaroo pelt
166 x 102 cm
\$5,500



Dingo
acrylic on kangaroo pelt
184 x 93 cm
\$5,500



Caught in a Trap
acrylic on canvas
59 x 59 cm
\$2,990
Commissioned by Cement Fondu, 2024

*Putting trap to trap fish.
Kids are trapped, mum and dad are angry.
Making a dam.*
"Caught in a trap" – *Suspicious Minds* by Elvis Presley



Butterfly Dance
acrylic on canvas
60 x 60 cm
\$2,990

Commissioned by Cement Fondu, 2024

Green locust painting the butterfly through dance.
Butterfly Dance.

Snake, Goanna, Goat, Swan, Duck and Spider all helping to paint.
"This way, this way".

Pattern in the paint gone everywhere, paint on their body, clay painting, mud painting.
The waterholes where they dance.



Save our Barrier Reef

acrylic on canvas

60 x 60 cm

\$2,990

Commissioned by Cement Fondu, 2024

Barrier Reef, Nemo (hiding).

Ship went down, Captain Cook, it's a reef.

Some octopus trying to tell the Prime Minister "Save our Reef"

"Come down in scuba and see it".

See what's down there.

Not enough fish will be there in the future.



Easy Peaceful Evening

acrylic on canvas

60 x 60 cm

\$2,990

Commissioned by Cement Fondu, 2024

Swan taking kids out of an evening.

Quiet pond, Perth.

Sunset, moon during the night.

Nice and peaceful – no humbug.



Save Our Country
acrylic on canvas
60 x 60 cm
\$2,990
Commissioned by Cement Fondu, 2024

*An old fella.
From the hard story.
His Country is waterfall Country.
All the wild cattle and wild horses are destroying the waterhole.
Animals and birds come to drink there.
Wild donkeys.
He's trying to save his Country before he goes.
Protect it.*



Darkest Day

acrylic on canvas

60 x 60 cm

\$2,990

Commissioned by Cement Fondu, 2024

Floodtimes.

Dogs during flood, some of the dogs stayed until the flood went down.

Went to get them back.

Some dogs had babies, swim with their babies to the boat.

They alright, happy again "Why did you leave me?"

Bring 4 boats, 1 boat for animals.

Dog at the top with emotional scar, trapped during flood.



Gold Rush

acrylic on canvas

60 x 60 cm

\$2,990

Commissioned by Cement Fondu, 2024

Mule, cowboy fallen off.

Looking for gold.

Fella got lost.

Forgot to find waterhole.

Mule smell the water.

Taking the mule the other way – didn't listen to the mule.

He died and the mule got saved.

Desert rose on his grave.

Swagman came along, stole the gold.



Our Ancestor
acrylic on canvas
59 x 59 cm
\$2,990
Commissioned by Cement Fondu, 2024

*Two Kangaroos weaving, even the joey helps.
Weaving the white Kangaroo on top.
White Kangaroo becoming red.
Marloo Land, Red Kangaroo.
Weaving is all the cultural parts of the story.
Bird doing his own weaving.*



Saving our Forest

acrylic on canvas

60 x 60 cm

\$2,990

Commissioned by Cement Fondu, 2024

Parakeet weaving with their beak and doing stories.

Take a break – enjoy a can emu beer.

For fire or flood they warn other animals to get moving.

Get up in the morning and do more weaving with a bad hangover.



We All Own the Land

acrylic on canvas

60 x 60 cm

\$2,990

Commissioned by Cement Fondu, 2024

Spiders helping out weaving, green locusts, all next-door neighbours, same Country.

We have a different way of weaving.

Big collaborative canvas.

Spider wants all the land.

Moth, Spider, Locust.



Under the Sea is my Home
acrylic on canvas
60 x 60 cm
\$2,990
Commissioned by Cement Fondu, 2024

Octopus doing a weaving.
Trying to tell Peter Dutton to dive and see what is going on.
Frog and Lizard on mainland weaving and telling story.
Same stories.
Some in land some under the sea.



Sky God

acrylic on canvas

60 x 60 cm

\$2,990

Commissioned by Cement Fondu, 2024

Smaller animals are the babies, carrying babies from the sky.

Offering the sky a sacrifice.

Traditional Walmajarri, sometimes.

Sometimes they still offer the sky.

Some from water some from land.

Night sky.



This is my Land
acrylic on canvas
60 x 60 cm
\$2,990

Commissioned by Cement Fondu, 2024

Animals of the land jigsaw.
Different parts of the land where all the animals come from.
The animals say "My place, my land".
Mob water, if you want to drink you can ask me.
Coffee/Tea.



Love Story

acrylic on canvas

60 x 60 cm

\$2,990

Commissioned by Cement Fondu, 2024

Frog doing painting, turtle and dog.

They are doing different styles of painting and singing.

Singing the swan, having a lovely evening.

A love song.

Swan don't mind their singing.

Frog doing a dance, ceremony.

Trying to impress the swan – even the turtle.



Numbat Night
acrylic on canvas
120 x 150 cm
\$8,600

*Numbats are quiet animal.
I never seen one, but I did it for their good colour.
They feed on termite and ants.
They same like my cat, they quiet.
They come out at night where they like eating at night.
Search for them in the morning but can't find it.
They shy.
Next time I use a torch at night to see.*



This Is How They Hunt Us
acrylic on canvas
120 x 120 cm
\$7,500

*Sometimes they trap us, sometimes they use spear, net, fishing rod.
Just because we barramundi.*

*White ones (circles) – We lay eggs to breed more.
Red (circles) – That's how they trap us.*



Took Our Children Away
acrylic on canvas
120 x 120 cm
\$7,500

*Part of the song from Archie Roach, you know the rest.
She feeling sad, won't have no more babies.
She is keeping the coolamon for memories of when they took the child away.
The red (circles) represents the government, police and welfare coming to take people away.*



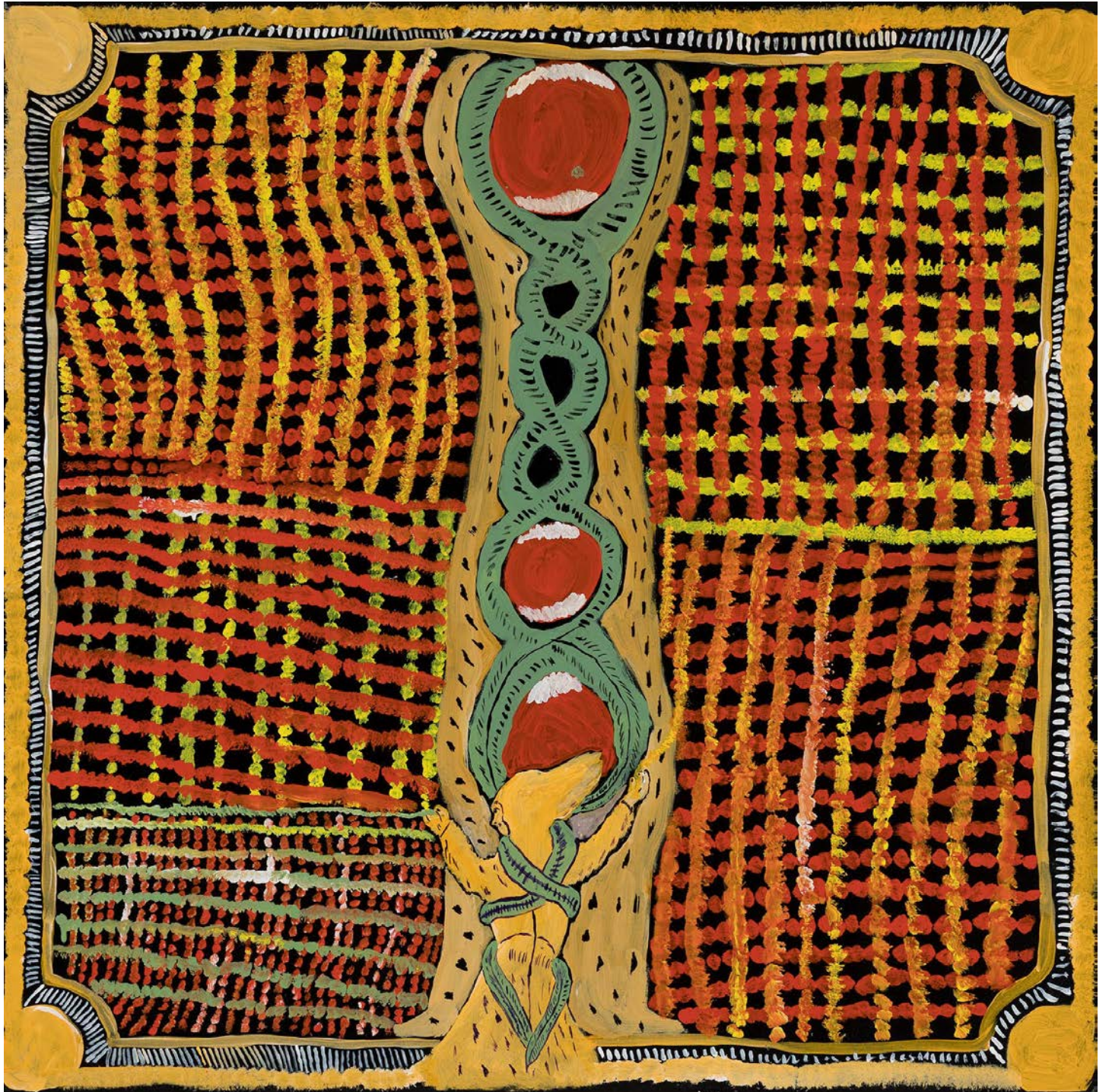
Yirriki Weaving
acrylic on canvas
120 x 120 cm
\$7,500

*Them birds they doing flower painting.
Sometimes getting honey from the flower and they weaving the flower together.
Little bit of help from all them lizard, small lizard.*



Weaving
acrylic on canvas
120 x 120 cm
\$7,500

Many women do weaving, you see the patterns.
Go this way, that way.
Its same like a spider doing his web.
Good pattern web and good weaving are the same.



Ah Bolla My Babies
acrylic on canvas
153 x 153 cm
\$11,000

'Unbranded', La Trobe Art Institute, Bendigo
6 May – 22 June 2019

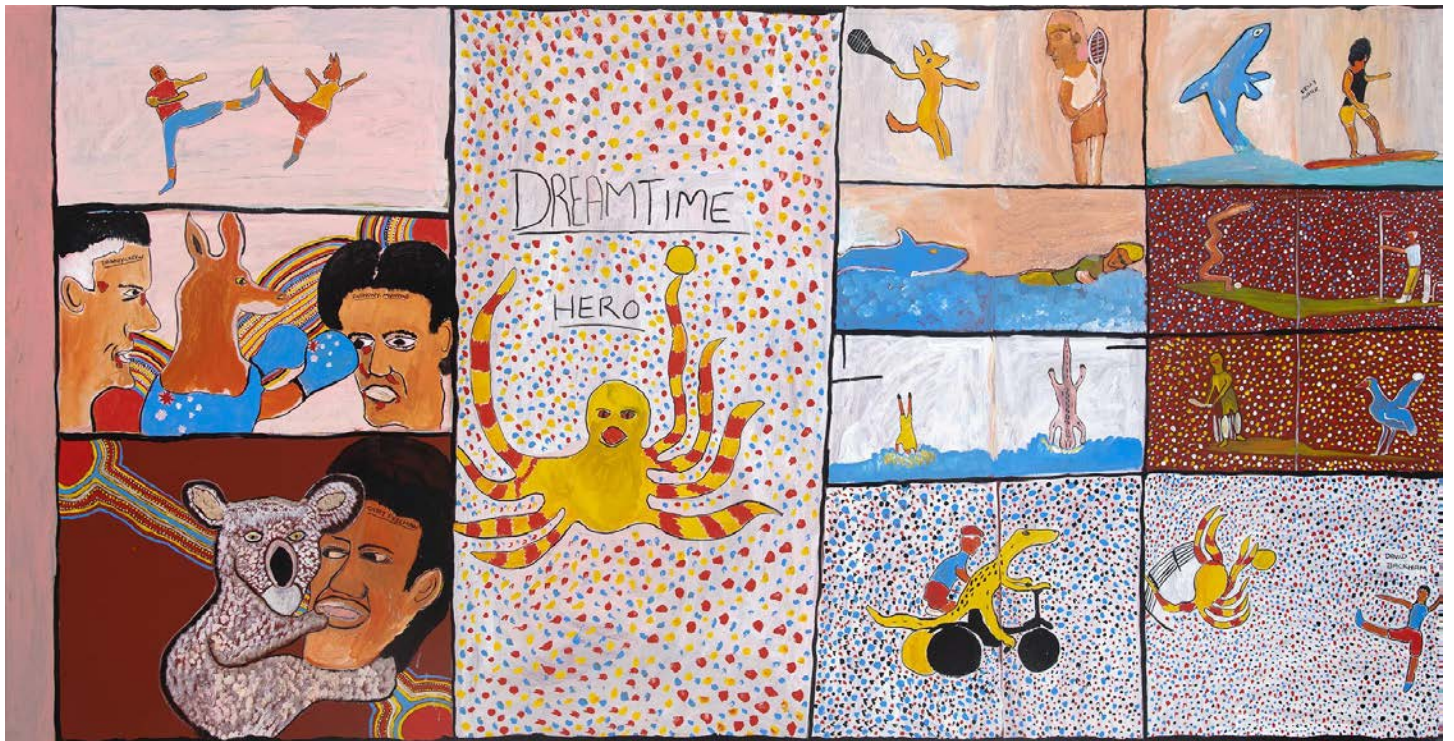


Few Of Our Aussie Stars Can Be Like Our Animals

acrylic on canvas

120 x 240 cm

\$15,000



Hide The Young
acrylic on canvas
120 x 120 cm
\$7,500

*Fish and kangaroo, bird and turtle, they all like the vine.
They search for food, lay their egg.
Gotta find a good spot to lay them, have their young animal.
Sometime fish find the lily pad to hide his eggs.
Even the turtle.
The bird will hide it near the billabong.
Kangaroo will hide it in its pouch.*



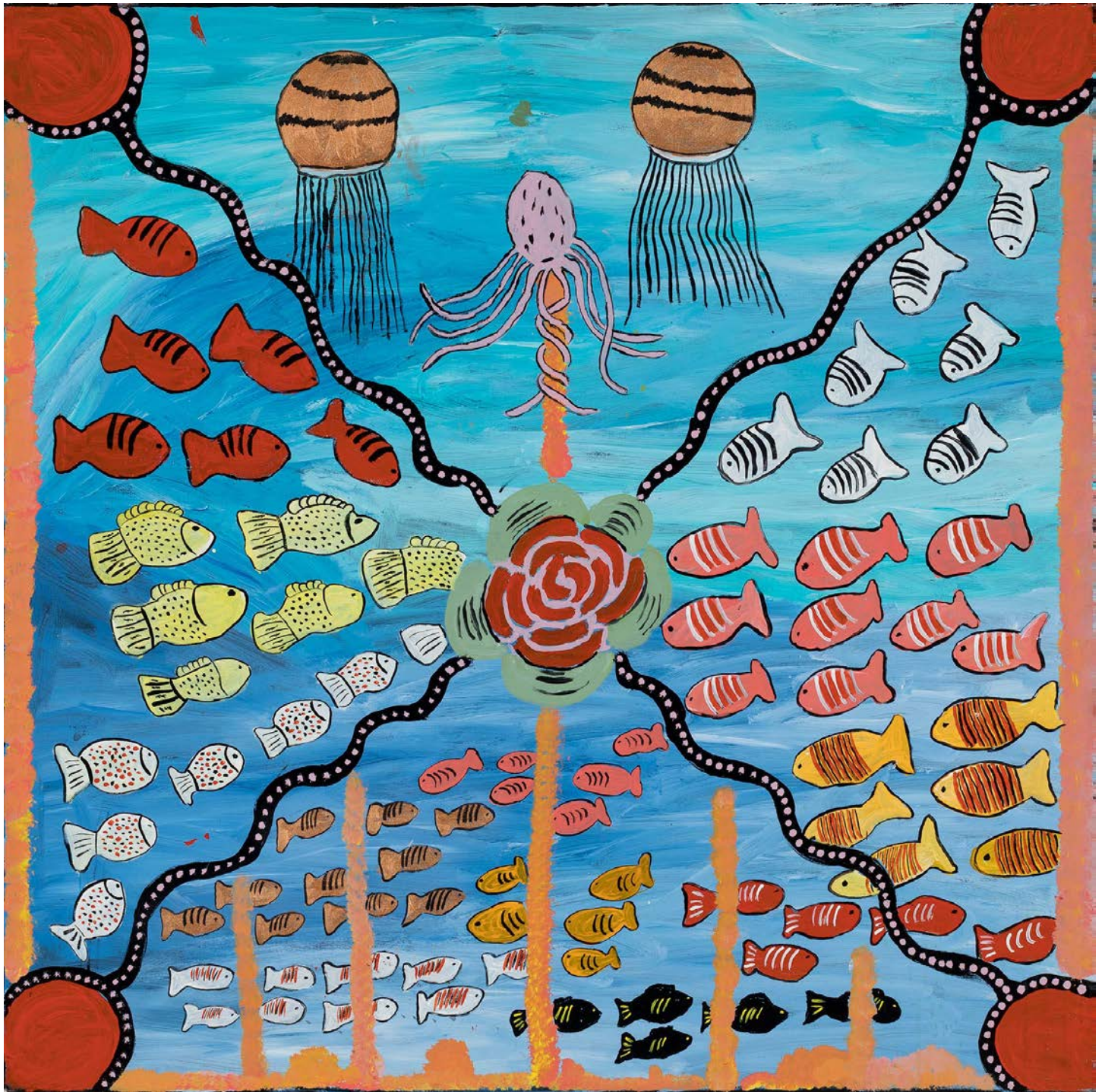
Butterfly & Bee
acrylic on canvas
120 x 120 cm
\$7,500

*They both working on the flower weaving.
They lay their eggs there, get food there.
They come from everywhere, come from different place to work on the flower.
They find other flowers in that different place, they do the same.
There is feed everywhere.*



Climate Change Underwater
acrylic on canvas
120 x 120 cm
\$7,500

Jellyfish and octopus, they're having a big meeting under the sea with all the fish.
"We're gonna fight for this reef, get it back alive."
Government won't help, shark won't help.
Government likes shark.
We gonna fight with all animals on mainland to keep our reef alive from climate change."



New Generation
acrylic on paper
69 x 88.5 cm (framed)
\$2,200

*This is an old one.
I did it because I don't know what's going on but look like everyone happy there.
Even the animal.
Even the shark happy.*



JOHN PRINCE SIDDON

Born 1974, Derby, Western Australia

AWARDS, GRANTS & RESIDENCIES

- 2023 Sulman Art Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, NSW, Finalist
Nillumbik Prize for Contemporary Art, Barn Gallery, Montsalvat, VIC, Acquired
- 2022 The Fisher's Ghost Art Award, Campbelltown Arts Centre, NSW, Finalist
- 2021 Fremantle Print Award, Fremantle Arts Centre, WA, Finalist
Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum & Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Finalist
- 2019 Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum & Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Finalist
- 2018 Port Hedland Art Prize, The Courthouse Gallery, Port Hedland, WA, Finalist
King & Wood Mallesons First Nations Art Award, NSW Parliament Fountain Court, Sydney, Highly Commended
Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum & Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Finalist
- 2015 Western Australia Indigenous Art Award, Art Gallery of Western Australia, WA, Finalist

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2023 Melbourne Art Fair, Arthouse Gallery, Melbourne, VIC
- 2022 'My Painting is My Voice', Arthouse Gallery, Sydney, NSW
- 2020 'All Mixed-Up', Fremantle Art Centre, WA
'Hatching Time', Chapman and Bailey, Melbourne, VIC
- 2018 'Hunting Season', Chapman and Bailey, Melbourne, VIC

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2023 'Dreamhome, Stories of Art and Shelter', Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, NSW
'Shadow Spirit', Rising, Flinders Street Station, Melbourne, VIC
'Be Brave, Make Change', Artbank, Sydney, NSW
'Summer', Arthouse Gallery, Sydney, NSW
- 2021 'Remember Them', Short Street Gallery, Broome, WA
- 2020 Sydney Contemporary, Sydney Contemporary Presents, Sydney, NSW
Creative Growth Artists, Outside Art Fair, New York City, USA
- 2019 Meeting Places Mangkaja and Creative Growth, Oakland, California, USA
'Parranga - Hot Dry Season', Outstation Gallery, Darwin, NT
- 2019 'Unbranded', La Trobe Institute, Bendigo, VIC
'Desert River Sea, Portraits of the Kimberley', Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, WA
- 2017 'When the Sky Fell', Perth International Arts Festival, Perth, WA
Bunbury Biennale, Bunbury, WA
'Sharks and Shamans', PS Art Space Gallery, Perth, WA
- 2016 'Revealed', Short St Gallery, Broome, WA
- 2015 'New Frontiers', Linden Art Gallery, Melbourne, VIC

COLLABORATIONS

- 2023 National Gallery, Volleys and John Prince Siddon
- 2022 Poppy Lissiman and John Prince Siddon, Luxury handbags and goods
- 2020 John Prince Siddon and Emma Buswell, Knitwear, 2020
- 2015 Australian Print Workshop, Melbourne, VIC

SELECTED COLLECTIONS

Art Gallery of New South Wales, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Art Gallery of South Australia, Art Bank, Nillumbik Council Art Collection.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- John McDonald, 'Inflatable animals and plastic poo? Our verdict on the MCA's futuristic reboot', Sydney Morning Herald, Aug 2022
- John McDonald, 'No boundaries': John Prince Siddon brings an original dynamic to Indigenous art', Sydney Morning Herald, Nov 2020
- Barnaby Smith, 'Prince and the Revolution', Art Guide, Feb 2020
- John McDonald, 'John Prince Siddon: eclectic, gothic and psychedelic', Sydney Morning Herald, Feb 2020
- Will Yeoman, 'Enriching our lives through art', The West Australian, April 2020

66 McLachlan Avenue
Rushcutters Bay NSW 2011
+61 2 9332 1019
vip@arthousegallery.com.au
www.arthousegallery.com.au

MELBOURNE
ART FAIR
22—25 FEB '24



ARTHOUSE

GALLERY

X
MANGKAJA