

ABORIGINAL ART

Words We Will Use Today:

Aboriginal: inhabiting or existing in a land from the earliest times or from before the arrival of colonists; indigenous.

Dreaming/Dreamtime: The Dreamtime is a concept for understanding the world and its creation, and includes origin stories and explanations for why things are the way they are.

Dot Painting: a painting made up solely of small dots to create abstract images that suggest pictures of places, animals, or stories.

1. Photograph of Paddy Stewart Japaljarri, 1995

Paddy is from just south of Yuendumu where he teaches at the Yuendumu School. He's taught painting, dreaming, animal tracking (dingo, kangaroo, goanna, etc.), how to make wax for the sand painting, dancing, making boomerangs, and many other important cultural traditions.

2. Photo of Pansy Napangarti, Alice Springs, 1994

Pansy is from just West of Alice Springs, Central Australia. Pansy's work is meticulously dotted, often taking many hours or even days.

Many of the Australian Aboriginal artists are women. Though the patterns and symbols used in this art are abstract they are well structured with many recognizable symbols. Symbols are used to represent men, women, babies, and creatures both in their daily lives and mythical traditions.

3. Carpet Snake Dreaming, 1987, by Billy Stockman Tjapaltjarri

Billy was born in 1927 and is one of Central Australia's Grand Old Masters and highly respected artists. Billy is one of the senior keepers of all his tribe's Dreamings.

4. Aboriginal People during Ceremonial Dance

Notice the dotted work of body paint – similar to what we see on many of the canvas paintings.

5. The Bush Banana Dreaming, (Yuparli or Uparli) by Eunice Napangardi, known as Eunice Napangarti

This painting signifies the journey of the Uparli ancestors which became the artist, Eunice's trademark signature. Eunice's work often depicts the Bush Banana within its various growth cycles. The Yuparli is known both as an important food source and for having special healing qualities.

6. John Weeronga Bartoo's work & unknown artist

Do you notice any similarities in these paintings? Both show a gathering of the community, people sitting around fires.

7. Flying Dingoes, 1974 & Honey Ant, by the Papunya Community

Look at the different effects of dot painting on different background colors. What stands out the most in each painting? What are your eyes drawn to?

8. Bark Paintings: Fish & Black Headed Python and Fruit Bats

These paintings were done on a traditional bark background. Rocks and wood were also used and are still used today in addition to canvas.

During the flowering season in September, "flying foxes" are attracted to the blossoms on certain trees. When they roost, their droppings fall to the ground and smell as sweet as the blossoms they feed on. The black-headed python waits nearby for an opportunity to eat as well.

9. Australian Boomerangs & Didgeridoos

Look at the beautifully hand painted boomerangs and didgeridoos by local Aboriginal artists feature native Australian animals.

Boomerangs are a traditional hunting tool mostly used for decoration now. Didgeridoos are the unique sound you will hear in the video. Many Australian artists use the didgeridoo in traditional and contemporary music. It was used in rituals and also for communication.

10. Now it is your turn!

You will be dot painting a Dreaming of your own today, on a boomerang! These are made of cardboard and will not fly safely indoors.