

Nyapanyapa Yunupingu - Lawarra Maypa, 2015

16 January 2015

The title of Nyapanyapa Yunupingu's fifth solo exhibition at Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery - a Macassan term that translates to 'pages and pages' – not only reflects the scale and specific materiality of her most recent work, but the incalculable energy of her practice that continues to defy the conventions of Yolngu art making.

In 2008, Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery presented Nyapanyapa's wildly elemental, figurative painting, which employed traditional materials of organic pigment on Yirrakla bark. In recent years Nyapanyapa has integrated new technologies into her creative process. This was seen in her collaborative piece 'Light Painting' (2011), exhibited in the 18th Biennale of Sydney, which digitally projected 110 drawings, creating an ephemeral dance of light and line. Nyapanyapa further extended her aesthetic experimentation in 'My Sister's Ceremony' (2014), realizing a series of expressive abstractions in white ochre.

Nyapanyapa's work in 'Lawarra Maypa' is a testament to her enduringly spontaneous and unapologetic approach to painting. Nicholas Forrest has described her artistic audacity as "not the irrational defiance of a young person trying to assert his/her place in the world, but is rather the acquired authority and confidence of a woman of great knowledge and experience." Her rebellious spirit and confidence are reflected in her new work – her gestures now bolder, asserting her unique vision of land and country on a new daring scale. Nyapanyapa's 'Yolngu Retjangura' (People in the Jungle) recalls practices of graffiti; her minimal, repeated figures invoking the spontaneity of this urban mark-making gesture. This is complemented by material experimentation throughout this body of work, as Nyapanyapa seamlessly integrates organic pigment with industrially produced texta-pen, positioning bark alongside recycled paper.

'Lawarra Maypa' showcases the vibrancy of Nyapanyapa's practice, which continues to challenge and engage contemporary audiences both in Australia and abroad.

Denise Thwaites, 2015

In 2012 Nyapanyapa was selected for the *18th Biennale of Sydney: all our relations* by curators Catherine de Zegher and Gerald McMaster. In 2014, Nyapanyapa was included in Ian Potter Museum of Art's *The World is Not a Foreign Land*, which continues to tour around Australia until 2016. Several of her works were also selected for inclusion in *Yirrkala Drawings* (2014) at the Art Gallery of New South Wales. In 2011 the Art Gallery of Western Australia exhibited several works, including Nyapanyapa's major 'light painting' animation in the Western Australian Indigenous Art Awards. In 2008 she won the 25th National Aboriginal Art Award and was also selected for the prize in 2007 and 2009. Nyapanyapa's paintings are held in major public collections in Australia, including the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, the Art Gallery of Western Australia and the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin. *Lawarra Maypa* is Nyapanyapa's fifth solo exhibition at Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery.