

Jack BRITTEN JOOLAMA

Born	c.1925-2002
Language	Gija/Gidja
Country	East Kimberley, WA
Community	Warmun (Turkey Creek)
Residence	Frog Hollow (Woorranginy)
Stories	Country around Turkey Creek, Ord River, Bedford Downs, Flying Fox, Limestone Country east of Kimberley, Centipede, Bull Creek Country, <i>Purnululu</i> (Bungle Bungle Range), Hermit, Barramundi, Initiation, Night Corroboree, Female Spirit.

Jack Britten was born at Tickelara in the East Kimberley region of Western Australia. As a boy he was taken to work as a stockman and later as a road worker. In 1982 Jack moved back permanently to Frog Hollow (Woorranginy), in the East Kimberley where he worked to establish the Woorranginy Outstation.

Jack Britten began ochre painting early in life. His grandparents taught him to paint using traditional materials, methods and themes. Distinctive features of his painting are the use of bush-gum or sap from trees as the binder for ochre (natural earth pigment) and the use of saw-toothed incising.

Jack Britten, a senior Gija (Gidja) lawman, focused his paintings and screenprints on his country in the East Kimberley, its origins, ceremonies and ancestral figures, merging into its spiritual and physical landscape. His Dreamings depict a lateral landscape perspective and gentle clusters of dome shaped ranges representing *Purnululu* (World Heritage listed Bungle Bungle Range). He is known for his exploration of the landscape using rough textures and bold designs, with distinctive dotting to outline the landscape forms, and to describe the country with its underlying presence of ancestors and ceremonies. Jack often incorporated body markings into his work to emphasise his ritual seniority.

Selected Exhibitions

- 1987 Aboriginal Art from the Kimberley, Goolarabooloo Gallery, Broome
- 1988 University of Western Australia, Perth
- 1988 Aboriginal Art from the East Kimberley, Craft Council of NSW Gallery, Sydney
- 1989 Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane
- 1992 Crossroads-Towards a New Reality, Aboriginal Art from Australia, National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto and Tokyo, Japan
- 1992 Broome Fringe Festival, Broome
- 1993 Images of Power, Aboriginal Art of the Kimberley, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 1994 Power of the Land, Masterpieces of Aboriginal Art, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 1997 Imaging the Land, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 1999 Images in Ochre, Cooe Aboriginal Art Gallery, Sydney

Awards

- 1990 Seventh National Aboriginal Art Award Exhibition, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
- 1992 The Ninth National Aboriginal Art Award Exhibition, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
- 1994 Australian Heritage Commission. National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award Exhibition, Old Parliament House, Canberra
- 1996 Thirteenth NATSI Art Award Museum and Art Galleries of Northern Territory, Darwin

Collections

Artbank, Sydney
Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
Gifu Museum, Japan
Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
The Holmes a Court Collection, Perth
The Kelton Foundation, Santa Monica, U.S.A.
Kerry Stokes Collection, Perth

Bibliography

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Australian Art Collector, issue 7 1999 Caruana, W., 1993, Aboriginal Art, Thames and Hudson, London.
Dixon, R.A., & Dillon, M.C., 1990, Aborigines and Diamond Mining: The Politics of Resource Development in the East Kimberley Western Australia, University of Western Australia Press, Nedlands, Western Australia.
1988, ANCAAA and Boomalli, Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Ko-operative, Sydney.
McCulloch, A., and McCulloch, S., 1994, The Encyclopaedia of Australian Art, Allen and Unwin Pty Ltd, St Leonards, New South Wales.
McCulloch S, Contemporary Aboriginal Art: a guide to the rebirth of an ancient culture Allen & Unwin, 1999
Ryan, J., 1993, Images of Power, Aboriginal Art of the Kimberley, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne.
Smoker, J., 1989, Turkey Creek Recent Work, Deutscher Gertrude Street, Melbourne.

Ranking - Most Important Australian Indigenous Artists (both living and deceased)
2011 **Ranked 43/100**