Tjaŋgala’s description of Tjangala’s oeuvre as exhibiting ‘explosive energy’ is also evident in the present work, where symbolic elements appear not only in the surface of the painting but in the structure of the board itself. Tjangala’s work creates a play of surface and depth, of pattern and control, and of control and opacity. The result is an effect that Bardon has suggested enabled them, and the Papunya artists, to ‘see the world anew’. This approach to patterning is a technique typical in typical Tjapukai paintings, as seen in the present work: ‘his vigour with the brush and unselfconscious patterning produced a seemingly endless stream of loved and honed imagery [at intuitive rhythms and pattern without ornamentation].’

Tjangala’s use of Tjapukai painting is also evident in the present work. ‘One is gripped with the brush and unsmarmalised tension underlying a seemingly endless stream of sound and honoured imagery [at intuitive rhythms and pattern without ornamentation].’

Kean’s description of Tjangala’s oeuvre as exhibiting ‘explosive energy’ is also evident in the present work, where symbolic elements appear not only in the surface of the painting but in the structure of the board itself. Tjangala’s work creates a play of surface and depth, of pattern and control, and of control and opacity. The result is an effect that Bardon has suggested enabled them, and the Papunya artists, to ‘see the world anew’. This approach to patterning is a technique typical in typical Tjapukai paintings, as seen in the present work: ‘his vigour with the brush and unselfconscious patterning produced a seemingly endless stream of loved and honed imagery [at intuitive rhythms and pattern without ornamentation].’

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journeys on similar scales, which centre on his birthplace, Yumari (Western Australia). And in 1985 Tjangala was joint winner of the 2nd National Aboriginal Art Award with another large canvas, also on the same scale. The present work is a favourite to his later, more radical evocation of archipelagic

Figure 3

17. The Papunya Tula Artists’ certificate for this work references witchetty grubs rather than flying ants (referenced in the site name), which are also used in planning sandstone sculpture at the National Gallery of Victoria, 2011, p.142

Figure 4


21. Sotheby’s, Sydney, 28 June–11 August 2006, lot 1, p.64


25. Ibid., p.75

Figure 2


7. Ibid., p.156


4. Painting 185, ibid., p.260


Footnotes