

Aboriginal Art



Monday
5th March
2018





Who, What, Where?



Who Are the Aborigines?

A group of native Australian people. Aborigine means 'native'. Aborigines inhabited the continent of Australia thousands of years before the arrival of European settlers. They travelled by canoe from South East Asia and lived in harmony with nature.



In 1770, Australia was claimed by the British. When other European settlers arrived, the Aborigines suffered a fate similar to that of Native Americans. Some were killed; others died of disease, and the rest were herded into reservations.



Aboriginal Art

Each piece of Aboriginal Art has a story, meaning, or function.

The process of creation is more important than the result.



To understand Aboriginal Art we first need to learn about Dreamtime.....

Dreamtime refers to their beliefs of how the land and its people were created

Aborigines believed supernatural beings with magical powers created the land's features, animals and plants during dreamtime

Art is a way to stay in touch with their ancestry and be a part of the natural world

Today, the spirit of these beings, known as The Dreaming, live on.

In Aboriginal culture **everyone** is an artist because everyone participates in activities such as dancing, singing, body decoration, sand drawing, painting or even weaving baskets.



Most Aboriginal Artists worked on surfaces found in nature, such as bark, sand, rocks, and even the human body

They used simple, rough mediums (feathers sticks fingers!) and techniques.



Types of Aboriginal Art:

- Rock
- Bark
- Dot
- Xray
- Body





Rock Art

"One old man in Arnhem Land remembered being carried as a child on his father's shoulders as his father climbed up a log leaning against a rock wall. His father then sprayed his hand with red ochre against the rock, leaving a stencil he could still recognize many years later. The main function of the stencils was to record people's presence and association with a site."



Bark Art

Tradition for thousands of years
Bark is cut into a rectangle, after the wet season, when it's soft

Placed on warm coals, pressed flat with weights and sticks tied to both ends with string

Painted with natural pigments mixed with a natural fixative: sticky gum from trees

Style is similar to rock paintings and illustrates stories



Dot Art

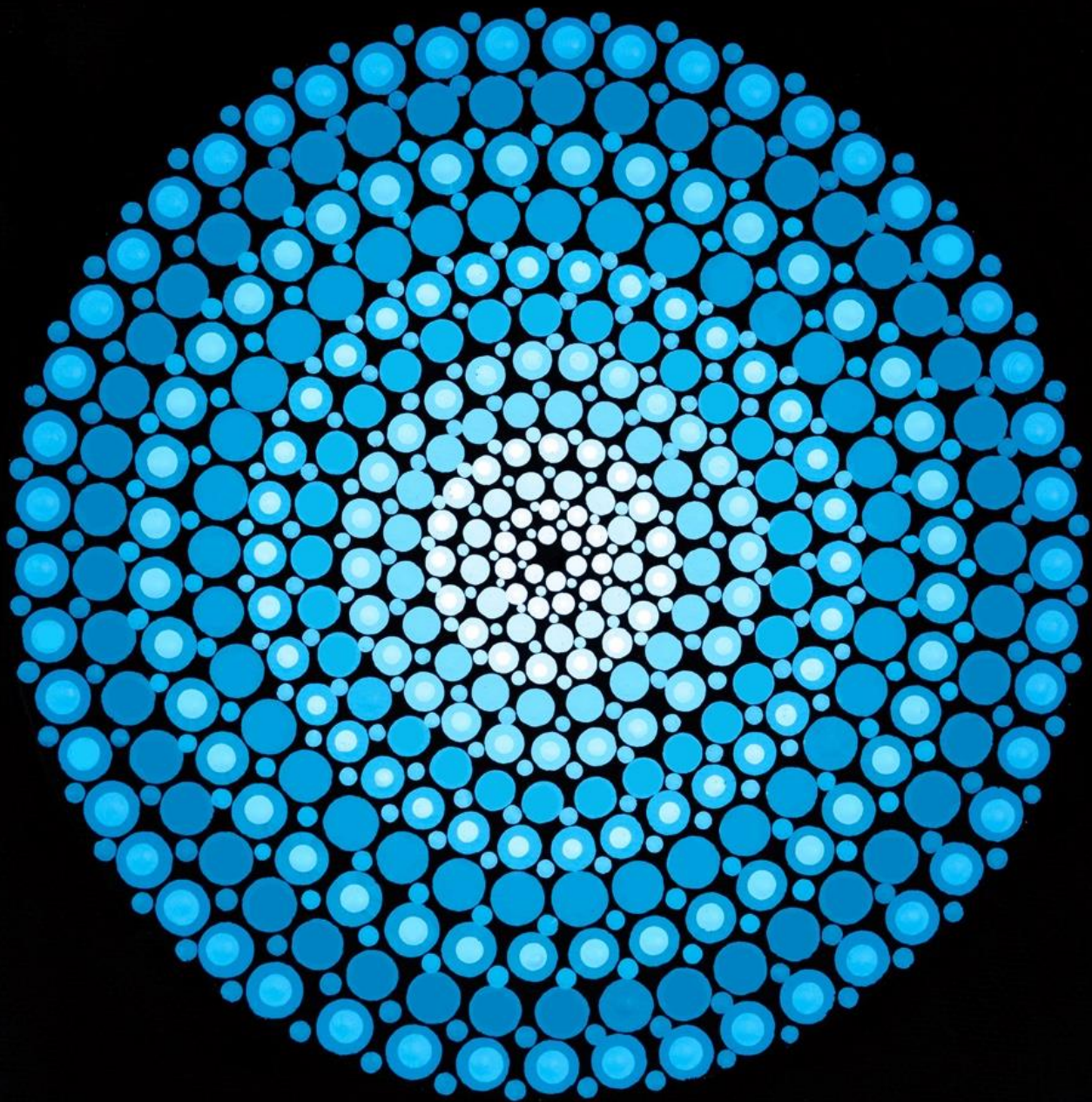
Traditional dot paintings were made in sand

Contemporary dot paintings are on canvas with acrylic paint

They depict a story using Aboriginal symbols....need to understand the meaning of symbols to 'read' the painting. Stories were passed down through generations.

When you understand the symbols it gives a whole new meaning to a dot painting

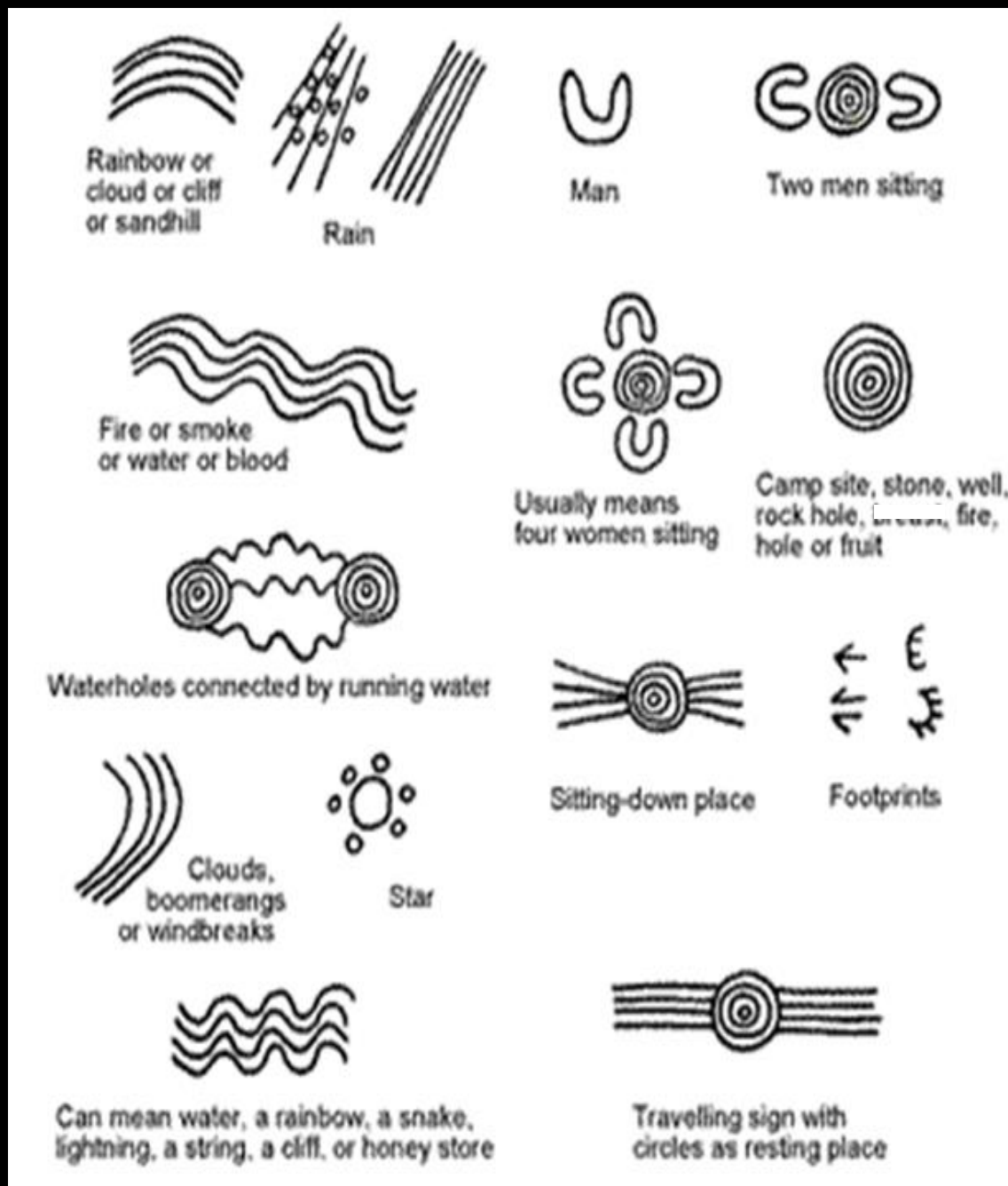




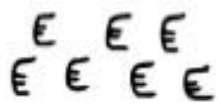
Aboriginals used symbols to represent natural surroundings.

They are shown as tracks left in the ground and look like they are seen from a plane.

Represent recent tracks left by animals or tracks made in the past by ancestors.



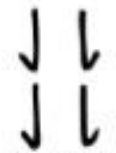
Aboriginal Symbols



ANIMAL TRACKS



DIGGING OR CLIPPING STICKS



KANGAROO TRACK



PERSON



WOMAN



ANTS, FRUITS, FLOWERS OR EGGS



COOLAMON



MAN



SNAKE



WITCHETTY GRUB



BOOMERANG



HONEY ANT SITE



RAIN



PEOPLE SITTING



CAMPSITE OR WATERHOLE



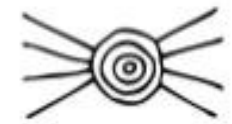
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WATERHOLES CONNECTED BY RUNNING WATER



STAR



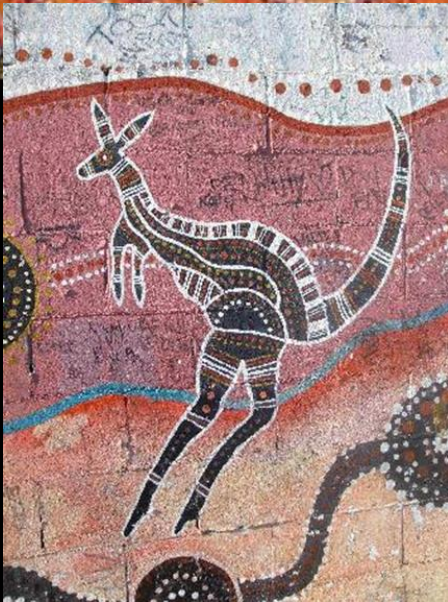
MEETING PLACE



CAMPSITE



Animals in Aboriginal Art



Generally, animals, birds, fish, birds, and plants are usually shown in profile (from the side), while turtles, frogs, and reptiles are shown from the top





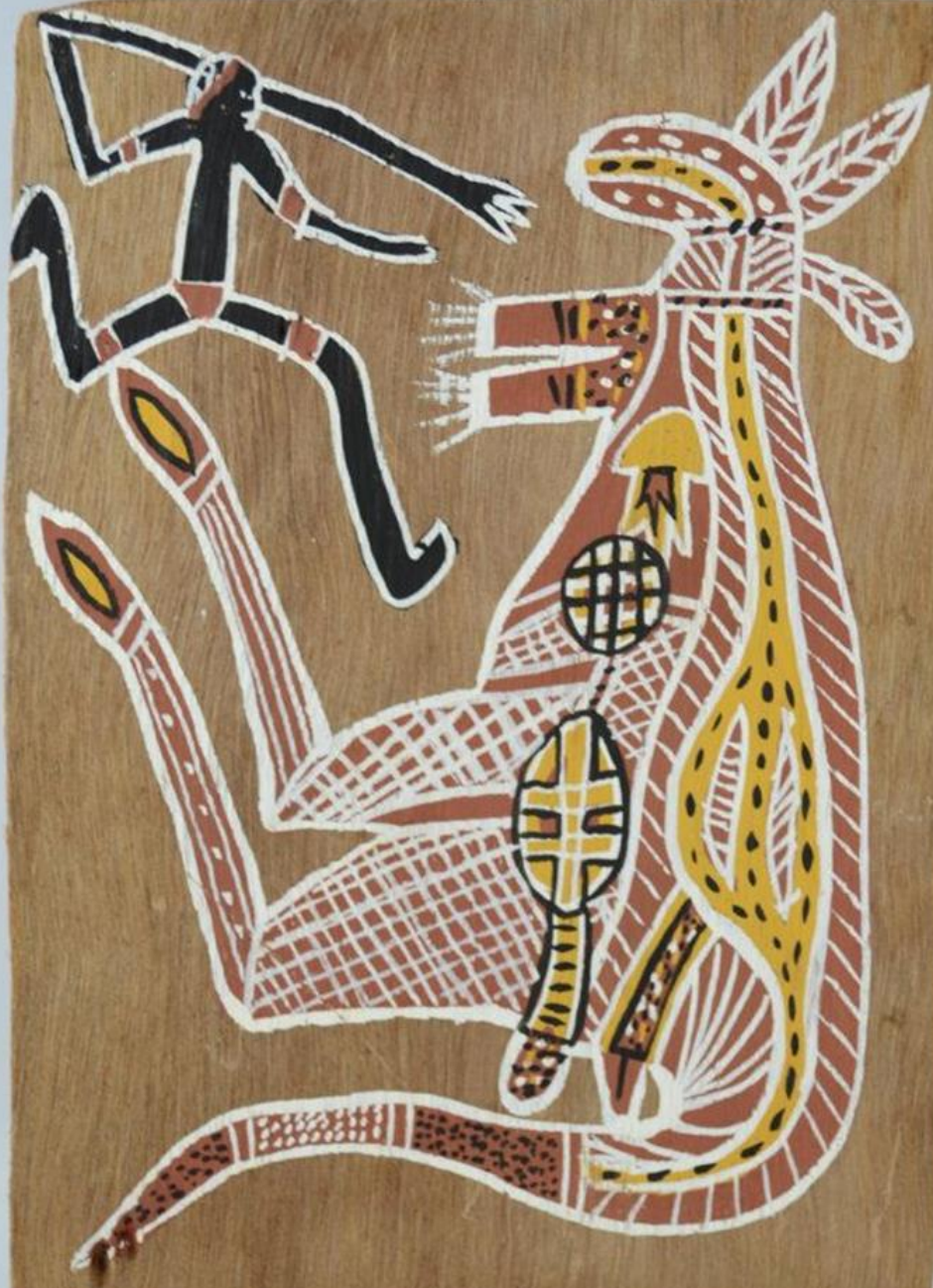




X Ray Paintings

- Simple exterior animal shapes that depict internal organs, bone structure (ribs, back bone), or baby animal inside
- Created by painting the animal's silhouette in white and using red or yellow for the inside









Body Art

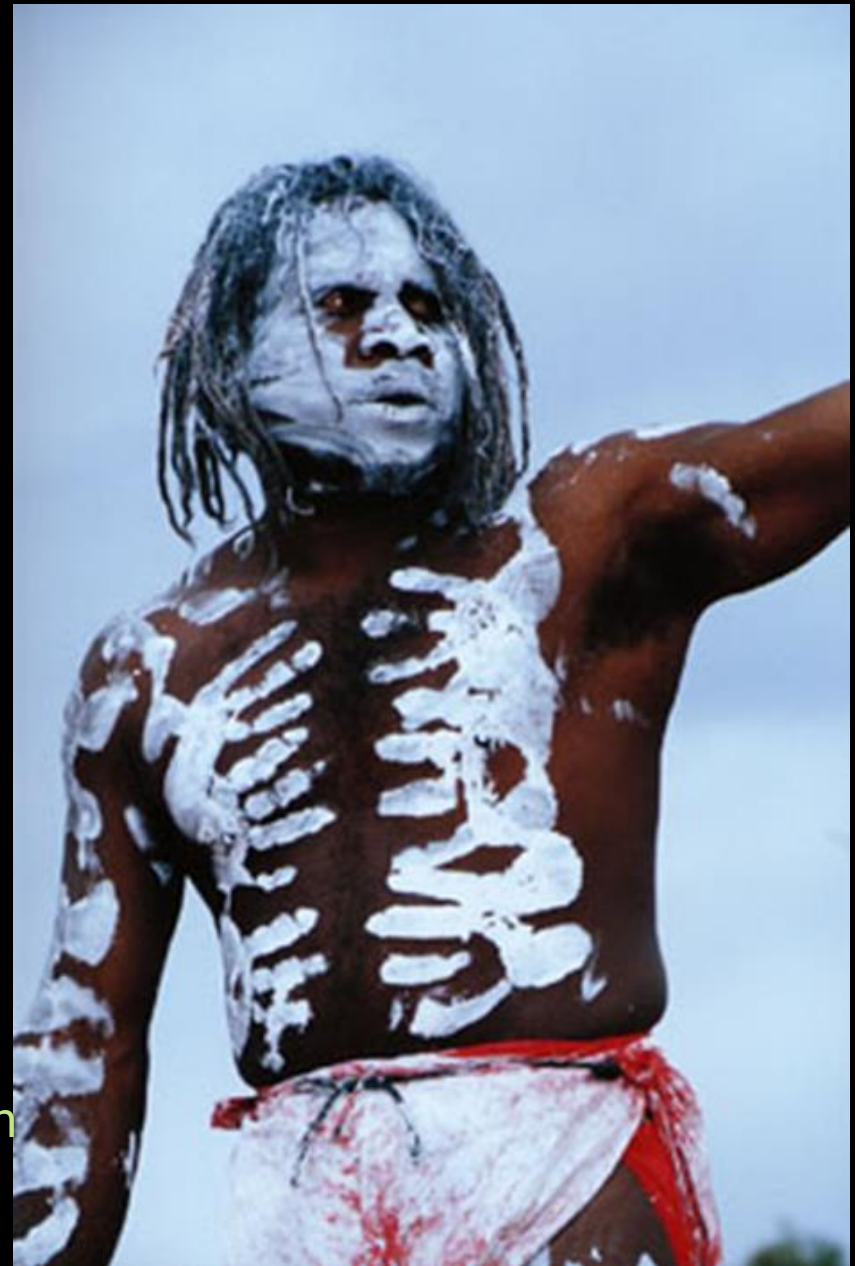
Traditional practice for ceremonies

Deep spiritual significance

Geometric designs

Use respected patterns of an ancestor to take on their living appearance

Designs may also reflect their role in the family or important role in their community



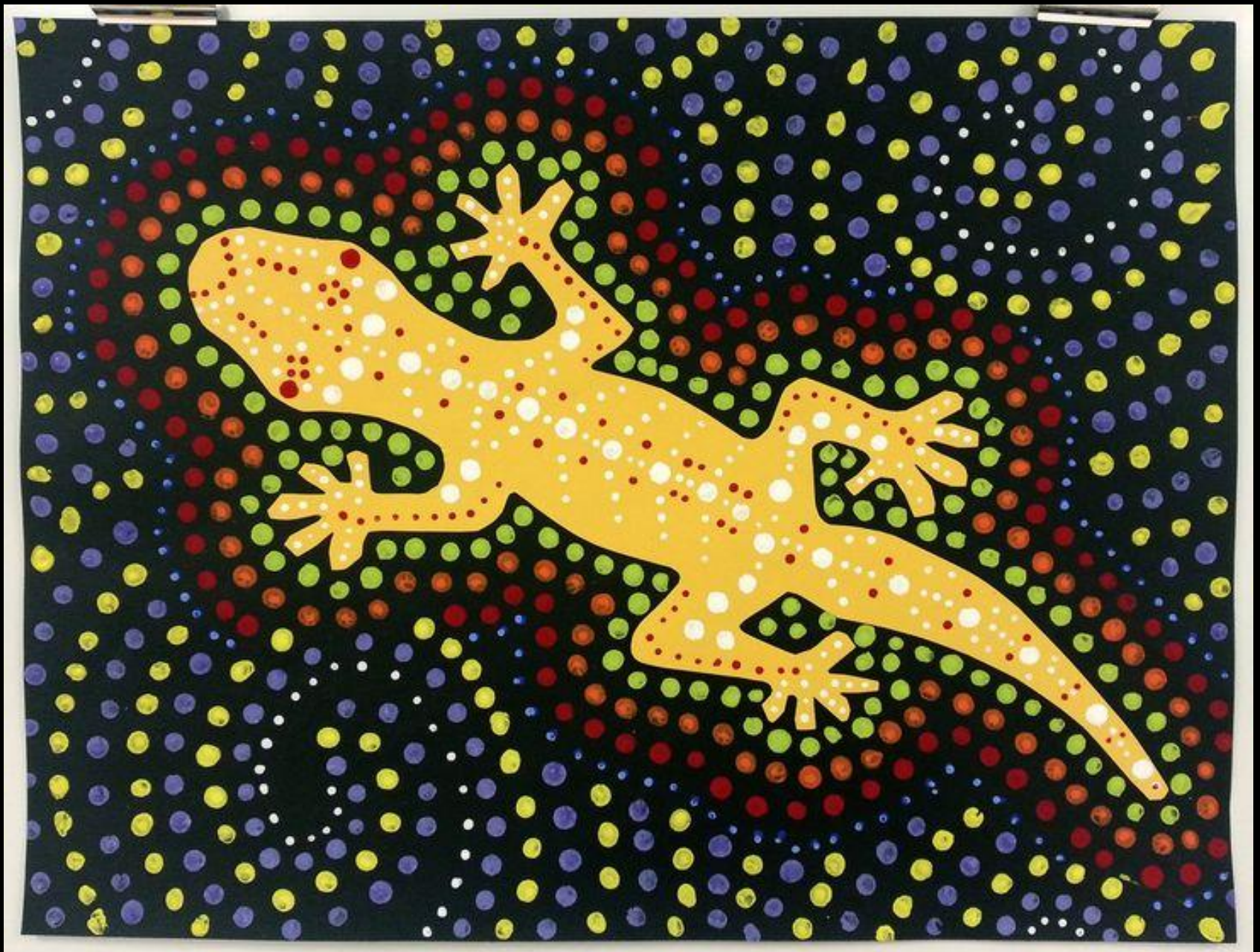






In Western art, objects or landscapes are usually seen from the side; in aboriginal painting, objects are seen from above

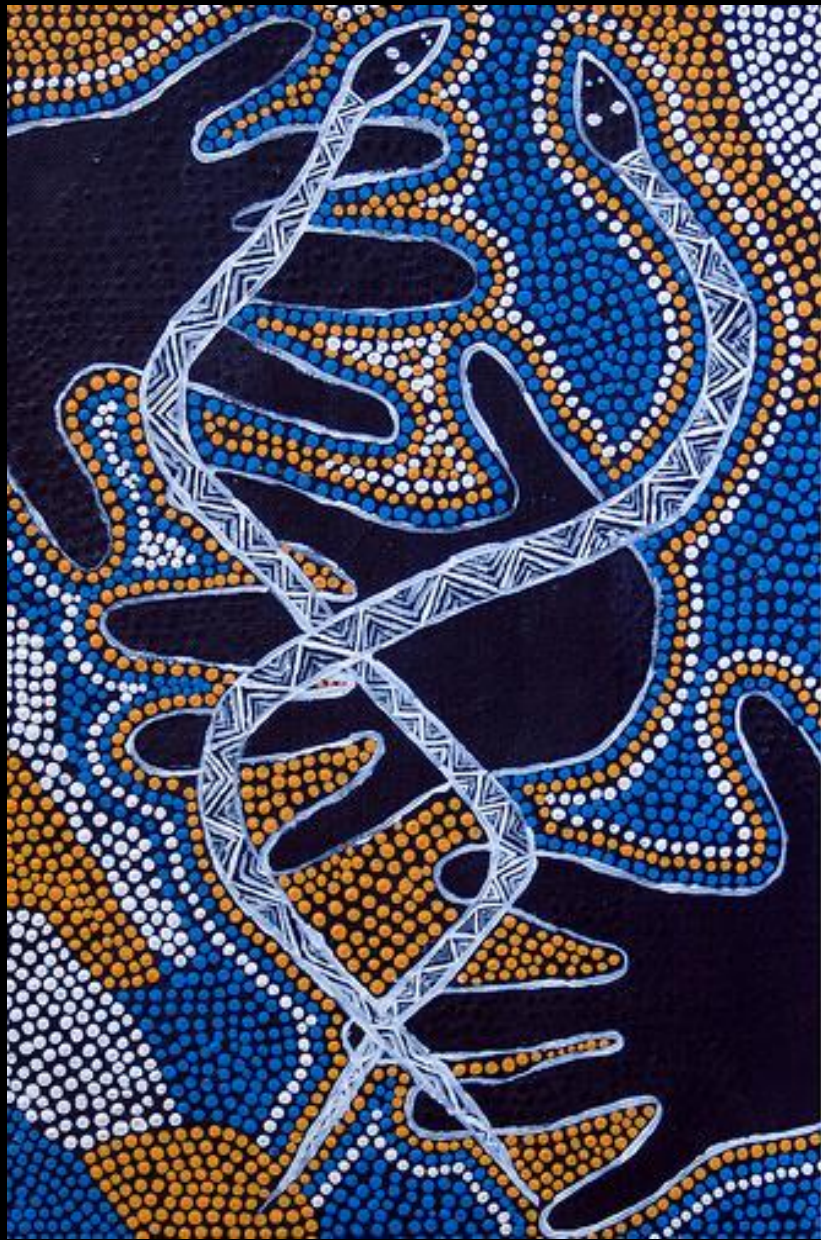




















Danny Eastwood





