

Recollections & Remedies

The "Bush Medicine Project" has been a collaborative artistic endeavour by 9 Waringarri artists following an invitation for an artistic contribution to the Ochre Health Centre.

Initially, Artists discussed what was culturally appropriate in earlier times and relevant to the health and culture of Miriwoong People and Miriwoong Country. Very quickly, a celebration and preservation of knowledge and culture became relevant through the concept of "Bush Medicine".

Artists worked on the project for almost 6 months, initially producing sketches and ideas inspired by the theme of bush medicines. Ideas and sketches were then developed as individual artworks before artists commenced a series of large collaborative artworks. Finally, the chosen artwork was digitally reproduced and proudly installed as the "Bush Medicine Wall".

The "Bush Medicine Project" encouraged Artists to become interested in the possibilities offered by 'the built environment' as a new "canvas" for presenting art work. 'The built environment' or in this case, the Ochre Health Centre presented fresh challenges to the Artists in terms of knowledge sharing, collaboration, scale and visual cohesion.



"It was good to sit together, painting together and learning the stories and memories from when we were young. We started small with drawings on paper and finished big. It was a good project. There were things we didn't know and now we have the knowledge about our good bush tucker and bush medicines." (Peggy Griffiths)

Recollections & Remedies THE BUSH MEDICINE PROJECT



Right

Artists worked on several collaborative formats before choosing the final design. The 1/5 scale format was then professionally photographed and digitally reproduced on-to Vitra-panel (cement paneling.)



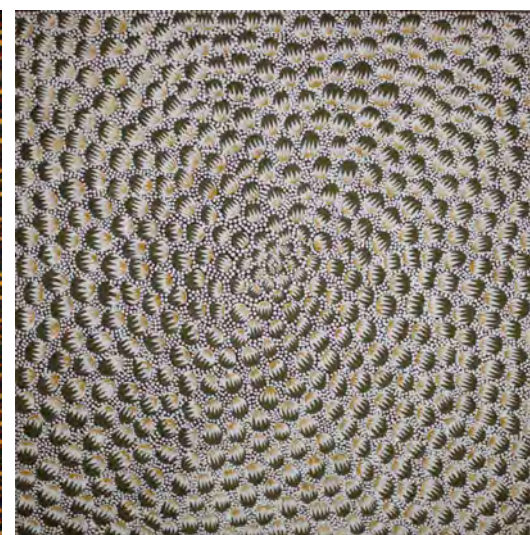
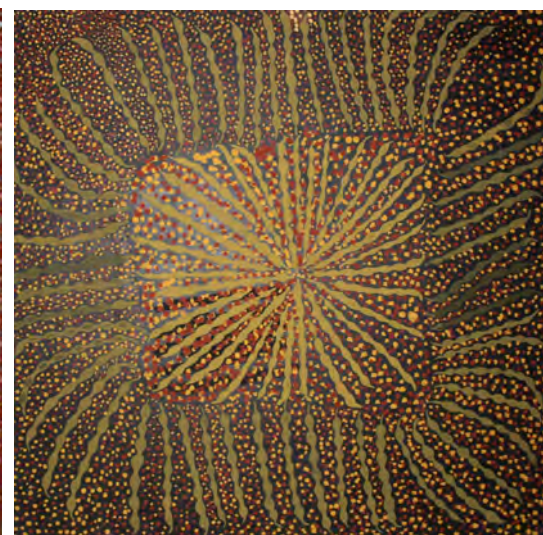
The artist's studio became a place for remembering remedies, sharing knowledge and teaching cultural practices. Through a series of workshops, Artists developed ideas, sketches and individual paintings recalling traditional foods and medicines. The project soon advanced into significant personal journeys with artist's reminiscence of 'the old days' before there were hospitals and clinics.

The "Bush Medicine Project" has been an opportunity to record and celebrate the practices and importance of traditional Knowledge. The collaborative process of sharing ideas, working together to combine individual visual representations that fuse into a dynamic whole has Artists appreciation of working together.



"We were all together working and talking about bush medicine – thinking about who would paint which ones."

(Judy Mengil)



Top row, left to right:
Phyllis Ningarmara
Louise Malarvie
Kittey Malarvie
Bryan Murielle
Peggy Griffiths

"Sitting together we talked and painted a lot, we learnt what each other thought what was the right colours and patterns to use to help the contrast and for this one big picture to flow together"

(Judy Mengil)



"I really enjoyed learning about colour and painting styles of the other artists while we worked together on one picture, it was different to when we do our own paintings"

(Louise Malarvie)



"I enjoyed this project. It made me happy to learn with other artists. Now I am proud to see the finished wall and proud that my kids can also see it."

(Gloria Mengil)



Girleng (Miriwoong) Jalbarr (Djaru) – Bush Tomato

A good medicine for diabetics. Old people ate bush foods and were healthy. You can eat bush tomato raw or cook it in the coals until it is soft.

Laweng – Lemonwood leaves and bark

The leaves and bark are boiled up and we wash in it to make us strong again. Also good for sores and rashes.

Gerloowoorrng /Garrjang – Waterlily

We eat all of this plant the flower and Yibooboong (the Stem), Gajajeng (the seeds), and the Galyang (the root) are all good food that makes people strong and healthy.

Gajarrang

Some varieties of spinifex were used as contraception – you might never have a baby

Jilinybeng

Bush Cucumber is a good bush tucker for keeping us healthy.

Mejerren, Daloong, Wooloo-wooleng, Girleng

Are all good bush tucker. The old people showed us to eat these fruits - sometimes raw and sometimes crushed up with their seeds and mixed with sugar-bag honey. Dimalan – the leaves are boiled up to wash in and cure skin sores and as inhalations for relief of colds

Mejerren – Black Plum

Black Plum is delicious food either fresh or the whole thing ground into cakes including the seed. Good Bush tucker keeps us healthy.

Garelng – Bush Melon

Bush Melon is used to cure stomach ache and diarrhoea.

Gerdewoon – Boab Boab pith

Rich in Vitamin C. Immature boab nuts are roasted and eaten. The seeds are roasted and ground into damper. Ground seeds combined with young cooked roots of Goonjang - the kapok bush are good food and also good for diarrhoea. Mejerren, Bardiging and Nyinggiwoogeng (Bush Peanut) are healthy bush tucker foods.

Nyoomiling – Bush Soap

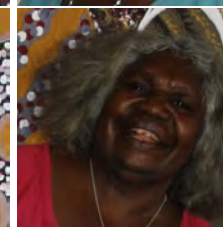
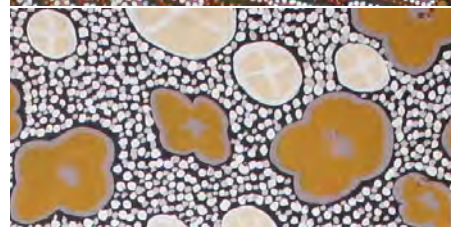
Bush soap is from a Wattle Tree. The curly seeds used for washing and cleaning skin.



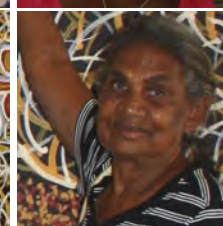
Kittey Malarvie



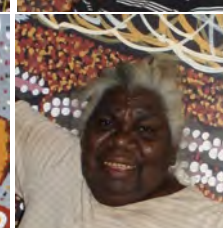
Phyllis Ningarmara



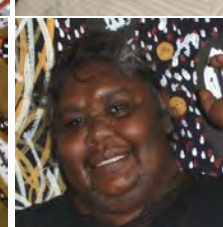
Agnes Armstrong



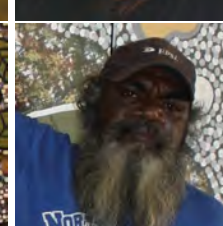
Peggy Griffiths



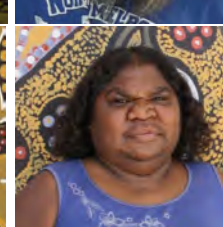
Judy Mengil



Philomena Armstrong



Bryan Murielle



Gloria Mengil



Louise Malarvie

Congratulations and thank you to:

PHYLLIS NINGAMARA, JUDY MENGIL, PEGGY GRIFFITHS, KITTEY MALARVIE, AGNES ARMSTRONG, BRIAN MURIELLE, GLORIA MENGIL, LOUISE MALARVIE and PHILOMENA ARMSTRONG

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Architects

VITRA GROUP®
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