An abstract painting featuring a large, soft pink shape in the lower-left corner, a thick, dark black curved band that separates the pink from the rest of the page, and a vast, pale pinkish-white background. The top edge of the page is irregular and appears to be the edge of a book cover.

**PADDY  
BEDFORD  
GOUACHE**

17 AUGUST – 20 SEPTEMBER 2024

**PADDY  
BEDFORD  
GOUACHE**

—

D'Lan Contemporary  
Melbourne

**D · C**



44

## INTRODUCTION



Paddy Bedford painting  
on the verandah, 2004  
Photographer:  
Georges Petitjean

In 1998, Paddy Bedford embarked on a trip to Melbourne, marking a significant moment in his artistic journey. During this trip, at the start of his painting career, Paddy and two of his fellow Gija artists were introduced to new materials at a local artist's studio, a friend of the artistic director of Jirrawun Arts, Tony Oliver. The offering of thick composition paper in black and white, tubes of gouache and pastel artist crayons was a departure from the artists' usual mediums of natural pigments mixed with synthetic binders and then applied to board or canvas, sparking Paddy's interest in the gouache medium.

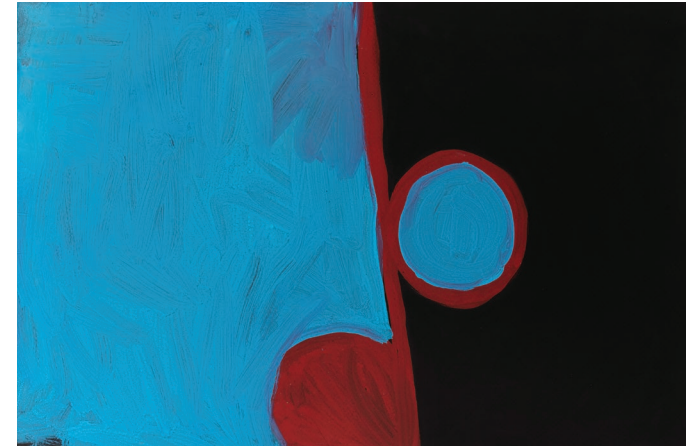
Where Paddy Bedford's widely acclaimed paintings evoke the sombre tension present in the crossroads of ancestral narrative and settler conflict, his gouache works on paper sing with joy in the act of painting. Paddy Bedford was introduced to the medium of gouache early on, so although he painted gouaches with varying frequency, they were a constant presence throughout the evolution of his career.



1



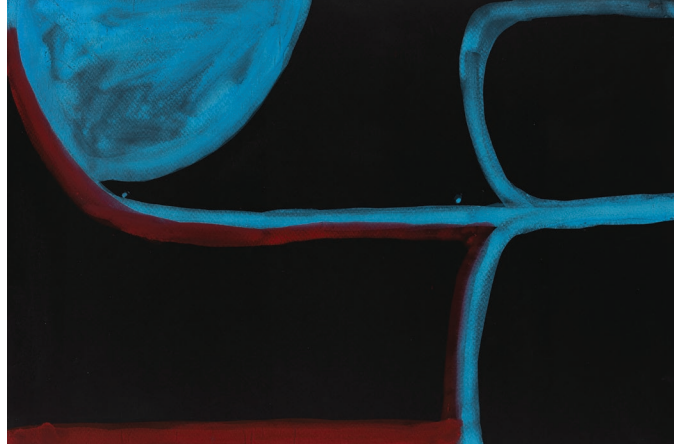
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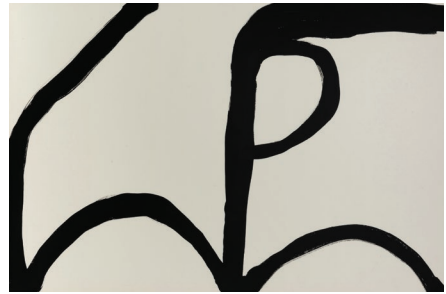




This group of gouaches, painted in 2005, emphasises Paddy Bedford's spontaneity when working on paper. These works are stripped down to the bare bones of his gestural forms. Each one captures one thought, in one line and a single colour, and together, they read like pages of a sketchbook, displaying the fluidity and variance in the artist's endless compositions.



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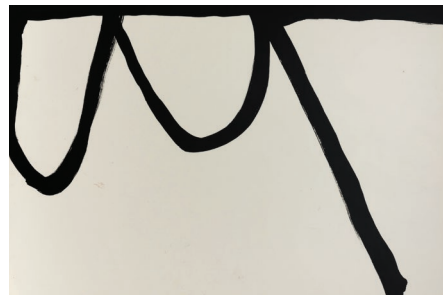
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Curator Georges Petitjean compares Paddy Bedford's use of the three primary colours red, yellow and blue to the Dutch movement De Stijl, particularly Piet Mondrian (1872–1944).

“For Mondrian, these primary colours stood for an ascetic spirituality. Primary colours do not occur in nature, as they are purely theoretical colours. Mondrian restricted his palette precisely because these colours turn away from nature and hence can be attributed to the quality of ascetic spirituality.”<sup>1</sup>

Paddy Bedford's bold gouache works on paper can be seen as a counterpoint to his paintings with natural pigments on canvas. Where the use of ochre grounds the canvas and its subject in local history and the ancestral narratives of the Gija people, the primary colours of the gouache represent a pure or universal essence of spirituality.

1. Georges Petitjean, 'The Gouache Oeuvre' in Vanessa Merlino (ed.), *Paddy Bedford: Gouache*, The Estate of Paddy Bedford and D'LAN Contemporary, Melbourne, 2024, p. 43.



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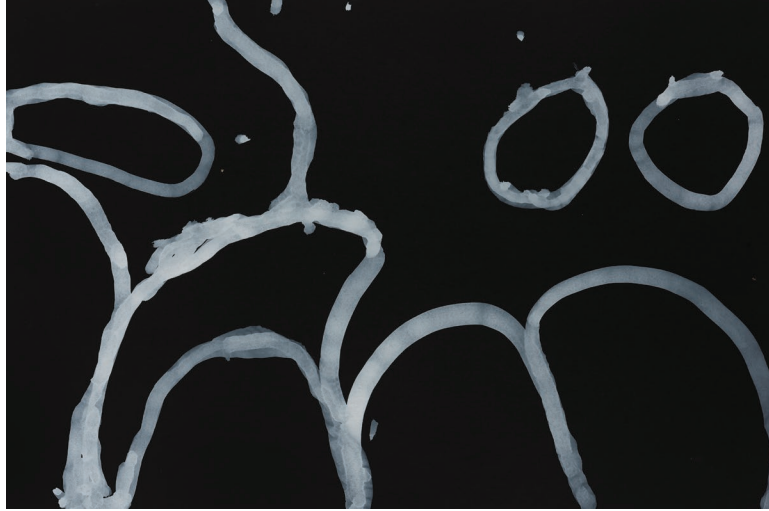


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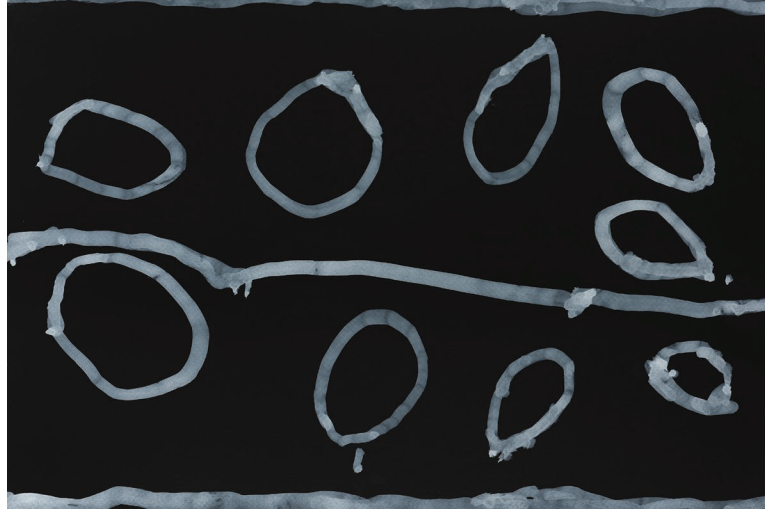


The last works Paddy Bedford painted were a shakey series of white gouache on black crescent board. The artist became increasingly frail in his final years, although he continued to live and paint on Frances Kofod's verandah. However, Paddy Bedford occasionally visited the newly established Jirrawun studio in Wyndham to paint. He would eventually stop the journey in 2006 and passed away the following year.

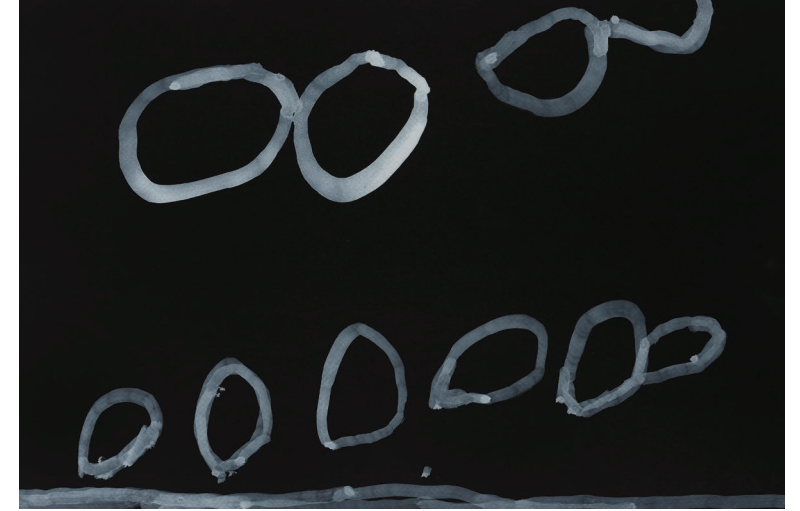
These significant works have never been shown before and have been held in Trust since his passing in 2007. His painterly gestures were always assured and made with conviction, making this final series unique as they capture a sense of fragility and vulnerability in the last years of Paddy Bedford's life in paint.



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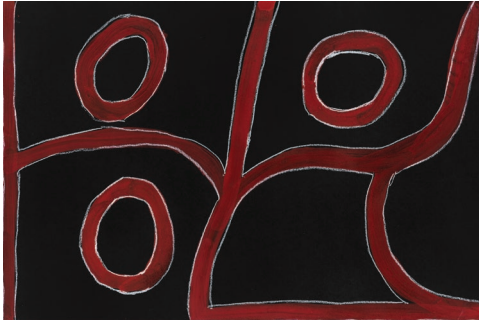
32



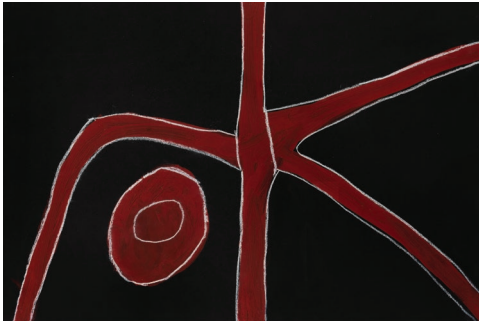
The gouache series are improvisations of Paddy Bedford's symbolic reservoir of knowledge and Law. Not only did the physicality of the Crescent board present a limited frame, but the performance and execution of each work on paper stays in dialogue with the ancestral topography of the Ngarranggarni, or Dreaming, even if it diverts from it. The gouache works are neither periphery nor a lesser art form to the paintings on canvas; instead, they give an insight into the sophisticated arrangement of his painterly gestures. The uniform size of the Crescent board necessitated an approach to composition similar to the use of barlines in musical improvisation. 'Each painting becomes a verse in song – a narrative and composition within itself and part of a greater composition'<sup>1</sup>

1. Tony Oliver, 'Bury my heart at Bow River', in *Paddy Bedford: Bury My Heart at Bow River*, William Mora Galleries, 2009, p. 19.





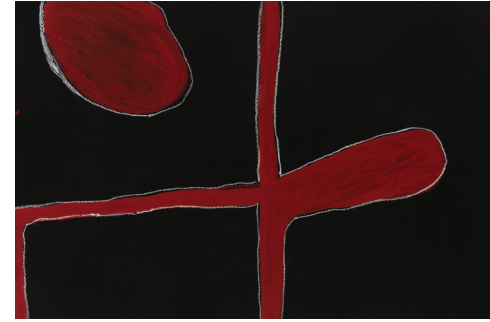
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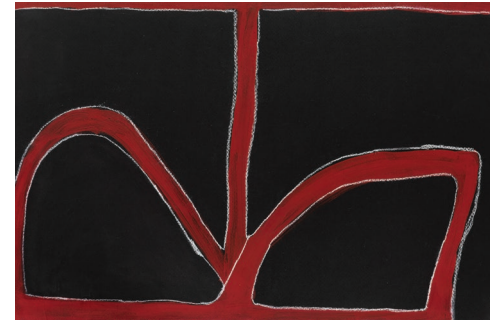
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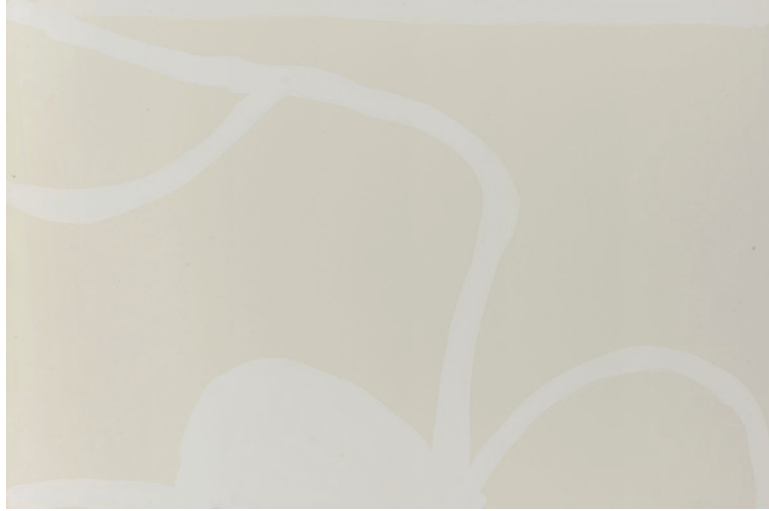


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## PADDY BEDFORD GOUACHE

### Illustrated Works

1. *Untitled* 2006  
gouache on acid-free  
Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 3.2006.270  
AUD 15,000
2. *Untitled* 2006  
gouache on acid-free  
Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 3.2006.273  
AUD 15,000
3. *Untitled* 2003  
gouache on acid-free  
Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 2003.149  
AUD 15,000
4. *Untitled* 2003  
gouache on acid-free  
Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 2003.141  
AUD 15,000
5. *Untitled* 2003  
gouache on acid-free  
Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 2003.139  
AUD 15,000

6. *Untitled* 2005  
gouache on acid-free  
Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 11.2005.276 R  
AUD 12,000
7. *Untitled* 2005  
gouache on acid-free  
Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 11.2005.276 G  
AUD 12,000
8. *Untitled* 2005  
gouache on acid-free  
Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 11.2005.276 M  
AUD 12,000
9. *Untitled* 2005  
gouache on acid-free  
Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 11.2005.276 L  
AUD 12,000
10. *Untitled* 2005  
gouache on acid-free  
Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 11.2005.276 A  
AUD 12,000
11. *Untitled* 2005  
gouache on acid-free  
Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 11.2005.276 J  
AUD 12,000
12. *Untitled* 2005  
gouache on acid-free  
Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 11.2005.276 P  
AUD 12,000
13. *Untitled* 2005  
gouache on acid-free  
Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 11.2005.276 F  
AUD 12,000

14. *Untitled* 2005  
gouache on acid-free  
Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 11.2005.276 H  
AUD 12,000
15. *Untitled* 2005  
gouache on acid-free  
Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 11.2005.276 C  
AUD 12,000
16. *Untitled* 2005  
gouache and pastel on  
acid-free Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 11.2005.276 N  
AUD 12,000
17. *Untitled* 2005  
gouache on acid-free  
Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 11.2005.276 B  
AUD 12,000
18. *Untitled* 2005  
gouache on acid-free  
Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 11.2005.276 D  
AUD 12,000
19. *Untitled* 2005  
gouache on acid-free  
Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 11.2005.276 I  
AUD 12,000
20. *Untitled* 2005  
gouache on acid-free  
Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 11.2005.276 K  
AUD 12,000
21. *Untitled* 2005  
gouache on acid-free  
Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 8.2005.233  
AUD 15,000

22. *Untitled* 2005  
gouache on acid-free  
Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 8.2005.255  
AUD 15,000
23. *Untitled* 2005  
gouache on acid-free  
Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 8.2005.256  
AUD 15,000
24. *Untitled* 2006  
gouache on acid-free  
Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
FOLIO 6\_8  
AUD 12,000
25. *Untitled* 2003  
gouache and pastel on  
acid-free Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 2003.126  
AUD 15,000
26. *Untitled* 2005  
gouache on acid-free  
Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 8.2005.259  
AUD 15,000
27. *Untitled* 2006  
gouache on acid-free  
Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 3.2006.264  
AUD 15,000
28. *Untitled* 2003  
gouache and pastel on  
acid-free Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 2003.58  
AUD 15,000
29. *Untitled* 2006  
gouache on acid-free  
Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 3.2006.262  
AUD 15,000

30. *Untitled* 2005  
gouache on acid-free  
Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 8.2005.251  
AUD 15,000
31. *Untitled* 2006  
gouache on acid-free  
Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 3.2006.275  
AUD 15,000
32. *Untitled* 2006  
gouache on acid-free  
Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 3.2006.269  
AUD 15,000
33. *Untitled* 2006  
gouache on acid-free  
Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
FOLIO 6\_3  
AUD 12,000
34. *Untitled* 2006  
gouache on acid-free  
Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
FOLIO 6\_9  
AUD 12,000
35. *Untitled* 2003  
gouache and pastel on  
acid-free Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 2003.138  
AUD 12,000
36. *Untitled* 2003  
gouache and pastel on  
acid-free Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 8.2005.150  
AUD 12,000
37. *Untitled* 2003  
gouache and pastel on  
acid-free Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 3.2003.134  
AUD 12,000

38. *Untitled* 2003  
gouache and pastel on  
acid-free Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 2003.137  
AUD 12,000
39. *Untitled* 2003  
gouache and pastel on  
acid-free Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 2003.143  
AUD 12,000
40. *Untitled* 2003  
gouache and pastel on  
acid-free Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 2003.146  
AUD 12,000
41. *Untitled* 2005  
gouache on acid-free  
Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 11.2005.276 Q  
AUD 12,000
42. *Untitled* 2005  
gouache on acid-free  
Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 11.2005.276 E  
AUD 12,000
43. *Untitled* 2005  
gouache and pastel on  
acid-free Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 11.2005.276 O  
AUD 12,000
44. *Untitled* 2005  
gouache on acid-free  
Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 8.2005.246  
AUD 15,000
45. *Untitled* 2005  
gouache on acid-free  
Crescent board  
51 × 76 cm  
PB WB 8.2005.248  
AUD 15,000



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Leslie Haworth

Installation images *Paddy Bedford: Gouache* at D'Lan Contemporary, Melbourne.  
Photographer: Angus Davidson

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#### ABOUT

Formed in 2016, D'Lan Contemporary sources, exhibits and sells exceptional works of art by leading and emerging Australian First Nations artists in Australia and overseas.

#### ETHICS

Our mission is to create a transparent and sustainable marketplace for Australian First Nations art and to respect and protect the integrity of the artist, the buyer, the seller – and the marketplace – from fraudulent sales or unethical procurement.

We maintain strict ethical practices and only exhibit and sell works of art with a clear line of provenance.

D'Lan Contemporary allocates 30% of annual net profits to centralise and distribute proceeds from art sales back to Australian First Nations artists and their working communities.

#### PROVENANCE

Every work of art exhibited and sold by D'Lan Contemporary has a clear line of provenance.

Documentation we draw upon to establish provenance includes:

- Community Art Centre certificate of provenance/authenticity
- Transfer of ownership documentation
- Purchase receipt or invoice
- Inclusion in academic / art historical publications
- Inclusion in exhibitions, and exhibition catalogues (private and/or public institution)
- Collection/exhibition inventory numbers (private and/or public institution)
- Inclusion in auction catalogues
- Documented appraisals

D'Lan Contemporary's guidance on best practice for buying Australian First Nations art is:

#### CONTEMPORARY AUSTRALIAN FIRST NATIONS (1980–PRESENT)

All contemporary Australian First Nations works of art should be accompanied by documentation linking the artwork to the artist via their Community Art Centre or their primary gallery/representative.

Community Art Centres operate with an ethical focus and establish their own individual guidelines by which all artworks are sold.

**Primary market** artworks should only be bought from a Community Art Centre or an official artist gallery/representative.

**Secondary market** artworks should only be bought with a source of provenance from a Community Art Centre or an official artist gallery/representative.

#### MODERN AUSTRALIAN FIRST NATIONS ART (1950S–1980)

For artworks created prior to the establishment of Community Art Centres, such as bark paintings, Hermannsburg watercolours, Papunya boards and sculptural artworks made for sale, there is less necessity for Community Art Centre provenance.

However, artworks from this period with no traceable history are likely to have less market value than those that do – even when an artwork is clearly authentic.

Highly desirable provenance for artworks from this period includes Papunya Tula Artists, Stuart Art Centre and Maningrida Arts, or a clear link to a primary collector such as Geoffrey Bardon, Dorothy Bennett, Sandra Le Brun Holmes or Dr Scougal – who were all active in the 1950s–1970s.

#### ARTEFACTS AND OBJECTS (1880S–1950)

With artefacts, often much of the important collection history has been lost over time. Therefore, proven provenance can greatly impact value.

Before acquisition, research should be undertaken to ascertain the origin of the artefact or object, and how and when it left its country of origin.

Best practice in this segment is to obtain advice from a trusted industry expert before buying or selling.

#### PROTECTION OF MOVEABLE CULTURAL HERITAGE ACT

The *Protection of Moveable Cultural Heritage Act 1985* (PMCH Act) implements Australia's obligations under the UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, 1970 (1970 UNESCO Convention), to which Australia is a State Party.

The 1970 UNESCO Convention requires State Parties to ensure that no collecting institution accepts illegally exported items.

The Australian Government administers the PMCH Act through the Ministry for the Arts. The PMCH Act regulates the export of Australia's most significant cultural heritage objects by implementing export controls for objects defined as 'Australian Protected Objects'.

If you have any questions about acquiring or selling Australian First Nations art, please contact us at: [enquiries@dlancontemporary.com.au](mailto:enquiries@dlancontemporary.com.au)

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