



GAPU GA GUNDA

THE ARTWORK OF NONGIRRNA MARAWILI

MEDIA KIT

Directed by **Ishmael Marika**
Produced by **Joseph Brady**



GAPU GA GUNDA: THE ART OF NONGGIRNGA MARAWILI

Produced in association with the Australian Broadcasting Corporation
Financed in association with Screen Territory.

CAST AND CREW

Director/Editor: Ishmael Marika
Producer/Cinematographer/Editor: Joseph Brady
Sound Recordist: Gayili Yunupingu
ABC Colour Grade: Simon Brazzalotto
ABC Post Production Edit: David Tucker
ABC Post Production Audio: Jikou Sugano
Series Producer: Danielle Maclean
Executive Producer: Nicola Harvey
ABC Business Affairs Manager: Claudia Lawson
Screen Territory Acting Director: Meredith Garlick
Soundtrack: Djambawa Marawili
Staring: Nonggirnga Marawili and Will Stubbs.

A Mulka Project Production 2015

Filmed on location in Northeast Arnhem Land and Post-Produced at The
Mulka Project studio in Yirkala.

DIRECTOR | **Ishmael Marika**
mulka@yirkala.com

PRODUCER | **Joseph Brady**
joseph@yirkala.com



TECHNICAL DETAILS

5 minutes | colour | 16:9

LONG SYNOPSIS

As Tropical Cyclone Lam approaches Yirkala, a small indigenous community in far Northeast Arnhem Land, Nonggirnga Marawili reflects on her origins. She shares her personal history from life as a hunter gatherer to one of Australia's most interesting contemporary artists.

Gapu Ga Gunda is an insight into the artwork of Nonggirnga Marawili. The title literally translates to water and rock, two of the main themes present in Nonggirnga's work.

In the face of the approaching cyclone Nonggirnga remains unmoved, choosing to continue to work on her art as opposed to succumbing to rash acts of panic. This isn't the first storm Nonggirnga has been through. As the waves pound the coast of her home town, Nonggirnga paints the angry seas crashing against the foundational rocks. We hear tales of her family's departure whilst she has remained grounded in Yirkala. As the winds pick up we see her painting Mundukul, the lightning snake, a name also shared by her long lost warrior father. She paints the electric power of the serpent spitting lightning full of sacred curses. The gentleness of her painting contrasts against the themes of her work and the wild weather swelling outside.

Drawing influences from her late husband's Djapu clan, her mothers Galpu designs, and her own Madarra themes, Nonggirnga balances between representing her sacred identity whilst adhering to the cultural restrictions surrounding sacred design.

This documentary takes us into the eye of the storm and allows us to witness how these influences and themes culminate into the creation of one of Nonggirnga's great works.



SHORT SYNOPSIS

As cyclone Lam approaches Yirrkala, Nonggirnga Marawili reflects on her origins. She shares her personal history from life as a hunter gatherer to one of Australia's most interesting contemporary artists.

ORIGINS

GAPU GA GUNDA – The art of Nonggirnga Marawili, is part of an ongoing short film series developed by ABC Arts in association with Screen Territory called Art X North which intends to celebrate and showcase the depth of artistic talent across Australia. Art X North is a short arts documentary initiative based in the Northern Territory comprising three five minute films, three filmmaking teams and three artists. *GAPU GA GUNDA* is one of these three films.

LOCATIONS

Nonggirnga Marawili and Will Stubbs are filmed at Buku – Larrnggay Mulka Art Centre in Yirrkala. It has a long and proud history as one of Australia's premier art centres and Indigenous culture strongholds.

Nonggirnga's usual studio is the paint stained courtyard where she works alongside other artists but the cyclone has taken her into one of the galleries, where she continues to work alone.

Her story is interlaced with imagery of in, and around, her home community of Yirrkala.



BIOGRAPHY | ARTIST | **NONGGIRRNGA** MARAWILI

Nonggirnga Marawili is one of the most highly regarded artists at Buku-Larrnggay Mulka, Yirrkala, Northern Territory for her highly sophisticated bark paintings and Larrakitj. Marawili's organic patterns in her remarkable artworks reflect an engrained, natural understanding of her culture, history and environment. Her practice began in her highly successful printmaking until recently when she reinvigorated her art form to paint bark and larrakitj in a totally new and supranational way.

Marawili also draws inspiration for her artistic practice from her familial ties. She paints the cross-hatched motifs from the Djapu clan of her late husband, artist and statesman D. Mununggurr, the designs of her mother's Galpu clan, as well as those belonging to her own Madaripa clan.

Will Stubbs, co-ordinator at Buku Larrnggay Mulka, Yirrkala, provides further insight into the striking patterns contained in Marawili's artwork:

The patterns made by a person who lives organically and not mechanically. This is what attracts us to Nonggirnga's work. She paints like a plant grows. There are no straight lines even where that is all that the design consists of. A grid-like pattern that is the interwoven branches of the young saplings in the fish barrier at Wanda cannot be drawn using a ruler. If a Western artist was to draw so freely it would be after 'unlearning' their programming.

Nonggirnga Marawili joined the stable of artists at Alcaston Gallery in 1999. Her artworks have been collected by the National Gallery of Victoria, The National Gallery of Australia, the Art Gallery of New South Wales, as well as many private collections.



BIOGRAPHY | DIRECTOR | **ISHMAEL** MARIKA, 24

Ishmael is currently a director, editor, and production officer at The Mulka Project in Yirrkala. He has worked on numerous cultural productions for the Yolngu community including documentations of dhapi, bapurru, and other ceremonial events.

Ishmael's first film was a documentary on Yolngu land rights entitled *Wanga Watangumirri Dharuk* which has screened at many festivals as well as a private screening with the East Timor President Ramos Horta. His second film, a drama depicting Yolngu sorcery entitled *Galka*, was launched to standing ovations at Garma 2014 and opened the 2014 Darwin International Film Festival.

BIOGRAPHY | PRODUCER | **JOSEPH** BRADY, 36

Joseph is a multimedia professional with over fifteen years experience in the media industry. He has worked on film, audio, internet, and interactive software products.

Since 2012 Joseph has been the Program Director of The Mulka Project which is a growing, living archive of Yolngu knowledge, ceremony, and cultural history. One of Joseph's many roles as Program Director is to produce films with local Yolngu film makers and media workers throughout North East Arnhem Land.