

# PANTUTJARA

Timo Hogan

SPINIFEX ARTS PROJECT

AUGUST 2021



*Outstation*  
art from art centres









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# PANTUTJARA

Timo Hogan

in association with Spinifex Arts Project

7-28 August 2021

IMAGES:

COVER: *Lake Baker 21-191* (detail) page 17

PREVIOUS: *Timo unfurling canvas* photo by Stephen Oxenbury

LEFT and PAGE 16: *Timo painting* (detail) photos by Amanda Dent

PAGE 24: *Painting at Lake Baker* Photo by Stephen Oxenbury

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Director Matt Ward

**Outstation**  
art from art centres

# Pantutjara

TIMO HOGAN

EXHIBITION CATALOGUE

AVAILABLE SOON

Exhibition catalogue  
36 pages, softcover  
20 x 20 cm

Essay by Brian Hallett,  
Spinifex Arts Project

Photography by  
Stephen Oxenbury  
Brian Hallett  
Amanda Dent

Artwork photography  
Fiona Morrison

18 works from the exhibition  
Artist statement  
Biography

**\$15** includes postage  
**PREORDER** [info@outstation.com.au](mailto:info@outstation.com.au)

RIGHT:  
*Timo at Lake Baker* photographs by  
Stephen Oxenbury





# LAKE BAKER

Timo Hogan thinks he was twelve or thirteen when he was last at Lake Baker. His father would take him up from Mount Margaret Mission and they would stay at the nearby homeland of Yapuparra with relatives and visit Lake Baker on extended trips, always hunting game on the way. For reasons unknown, Timo never went to the lake after this last trip with his father but held a distinct paternal connection and a wish to someday return to the country that shaped him as a child. Timo never painted any other country, only Lake Baker. As his painting career began to grow a special trip was planned with Spinifex Arts Project for Timo to visit his frail father, who was residing in Wanarn Aged Care on the Ngaanyatjarra Lands, and to once again explore the site of Lake Baker (with his father if possible). And so on a warm May day, we set off from Timo's home of Tjuntjuntjara on a 2000 kilometre journey to find the place behind the painting and for Timo to talk with his father.

When we arrived the next day, Timo was feeling positive. By campfire the previous evening, he had spoken at length about the last time he had seen his father. It was nearly two years ago at the same Aged Care facility and his father had been in good spirits. They had talked and laughed and Timo said he had left that visit with a feeling he would return before too long. But today, even with Timo's positive prompts, his father, Neville MacArthur, was immobilised by his own frailty, confined to his bed and seemingly unable to fully comprehend the presence of Timo in the room. Timo spoke at length with Neville and we Face Timed with others back at Tjuntjuntjara but there was minimal response from the old man as he drifted in and out of presence. It seemed his end was coming. We left there with Timo very sad at the realisation he was not likely to see his father again.

We bought supplies from the community store and drove through long periods of silence, south west to Warburton. Both of us were thinking about the incredibly frail man we'd just seen but for Timo the implications were far greater. When we finally turned onto the Connie Sue Highway, a rough track that departs Warburton directly south and where Lake Baker hides, Timo began to talk about his future, explaining that he was to 'talk up' for Lake Baker, now that his father couldn't speak for the place.

As the track wandered deeper south the country expanded, opening up into great undulating panoramas of distant treeless bluffs. There were large rolling sand ridges that the road would dip between before traversing high upon rocky ridges where one couldn't quite take in the vast expanse on all sides. Timo pointed south and said "My Country now". Not that it wasn't ever 'his country' but the personal implications of this cultural transference through paternal lineages signaled for Timo, another level of custodianship. With his father incapacitated and unable to make decisions for the special site of Lake Baker, Timo was beginning to internalise the ramifications for himself. I could sense him growing in stature as he took ownership translated as responsibility, for what will ultimately be the decision making of a portion of country that now, culturally belongs to him.

We turned off the small track that was the Connie Sue and onto an even smaller, rougher and at times barely visible trail that led us ever so slowly downwards to a bouldered dry creek crossing before ascending and opening into a majestic valley circled by red rocky bluffs. This seemed like the ultimate paradise with the lowering sun hitting the rock, vividly illuminating the escarpments. It felt all the more powerful since it was obvious no vehicle had traversed this

section of track for a long period. No visible signs that anyone had been through here could be found and the grass was the highest I'd seen. I feared the extent of the next fire that would one day sweep through the valley as the natural dry fuel was everywhere. Timo said we were approaching an outstation and although it was obscured by growth we did see the broken windmill from a distance before entering an open site scattered with metal debris and a long abandoned look about the two small metal clad buildings within it. We pulled up and Timo excitedly leapt from the vehicle. He was unfazed by the obvious dilapidation surrounding him and was suddenly transferred back to childhood and began describing the surrounds as they had been when he last saw them some thirty five years ago. Shaking his head occasionally to bring his memories into order, he pointed at the large line of river gums in the distance and described a rope swing that as children, they would use to jump into the nearby waterhole.

We walked the perimeter of the outstation with Timo bringing to life the broken scene in front of us, making it full of people, with children playing, a pleasant and harmonious place, staring and smiling as he retrieved the memory. He showed a bent and broken small rusted green metal box attached to a steel pole between the buildings and described talking on the two-way radio to people at Warburton. The vision was beautiful. There was conflicting joy and sadness as he took it all in and saw his past life before him, and with eyes welling he turned and said we should leave as we cannot camp here.

The sun was setting as we drove slowly further west through large tracks of overgrown grasslands following the line of the creek but once darkness fell, it was hard to see any vista. Timo wanted to push on, always a little further, a little closer to what was becoming the elusive Lake Baker. I realised his father would have to have been remarkably healthy to attempt what was now a long and tiring journey, though he may have been energised with the same sense of enthusiasm for the place as Timo was expressing. After driving too far into the night, with tired eyes we set up camp at what seemed to be a high point but in the dark we couldn't know for sure. As we lit a fire Timo became more and more animated by the proximity to Lake Baker, almost sniffing it on the breeze that had sprung up while looking off into the dark distance. There was definitely something in the air at that camp but I was exhausted after a long day of emotional travel and crawled into my swag shortly after the evening hot drink and drifted in and out of light sleep, while trying to avoid the campfire smoke and the chilling wind. It was at some time after, exactly when I can't say, that Timo began to talk forcefully and anxiously in language into the dark moonless night. Without looking I knew he was sitting up in his swag but I stayed sheltered from the wind under blankets whilst sensing everything that was happening. He was talking to a being or beings that inhabit Lake Baker, to those that were part of the creation, who shaped the lake and made the surrounding landscape and who as Timo sees, still reside here. He was appeasing them, these beings of power and authority, telling them that he was family, that he meant no harm, that he was his father's son and he was responsible for looking after this country now, this home. The wind blew discernibly stronger. I began to feel an answering from the surrounds as Timo continued to talk almost conversationally, intermittently and now more calmly. I listened on for a time, till the wind began to slow and I fell into deep sleep.

When I awoke in the morning I saw where we were camped. High upon a previously burnt plateau with distant views to what I sensed was the south. The sun had yet to rise and it felt bleak with the cold morning chill and the past scorched earth so I quickly reignited the coals from last night's fire and got the morning coffee boiling. Timo was sound asleep on his back with a relaxed outstretched arm protruding from under his blankets making him look, if not for the rhythmic snoring, like a man unconscious. I remembered his talking from last night and felt my skin tingle as I looked around the landscape. I knew not to readily dismiss the events even though they seemed far from my humble suburban upbringing and I had had prior experience of Anangu, and seemingly, 'other dimensions'. Over the years, people had often spoke of 'feather feet' in communities, of beings from the Tjukurpa creeping around at night, watching you as you slept, leaving no footprints. Sometimes these beings had been seen in houses, had looked at individuals, had even spoken in a dreamlike state and were feared by their ability to permeate through the realms. If one was to believe, one had to accept that Anangu through their cultural spirituality may tap into a place that we cannot begin to comprehend. Such a place is a fourth dimension, where our perception would have to be altered so far that our present minds couldn't cope. Therefore we retreat to the safety of dismissal or condescension. I was keeping an open as I could, mind.

Breakfast was almost cooked by the time Timo woke but he was awake in an instant, ready for food and coffee. He spoke of the being that visited him in the night, a giant papa (dog) and pointed to a large tree nearby as a size comparison. Boom! He slapped both his hands on the end of his swag and told how the dog had awoken him. He said he had to pacify him, explain who he was and why he was here before the giant dog eventually left. Timo seemed even more culturally invigorated by the fact the dog had come to him in the night. He was keen to set off for Lake Baker that was presumably 'close up'.

The track descended soon after starting out and Timo made circular motions with his hand, "Going down, going down" he said. But it was some slow travelling time before the country once again opened up and we almost stumbled upon the salt lake. We had had no view of it before we were upon it even though we had come from high above. Timo motioned away from the lake and said "Ngura. Wanampiku ngura" meaning this was the home of the water serpent who still resides here. We pulled the vehicle closer to the lake and got out, Timo was talking in language, full of awe and smiling. He pointed to two trees skirting the edge of the lake and said they were Wati Kutjara or the Two Men that he had spoken about prior. Then gesturing toward the lake, there also was Wati Kutjara in the form of two small grassed tussocks or islands. He was walking on air as he moved swiftly to the edge and looked out, taking in the great expanse, "really big one" he said as his arm swept in the view. He was talking as he remembered, as all his father had told him came through to his present awareness. It was like watching the unlocking of a series of doors with memory contained behind each. He pointed to the direction where the Two Men had originally come from and the great swales left by them in the earth. It made a picture of epic proportions, of creation beings shaping the environment they became part of, translating their movements into the landscape. Timo spoke of the blind water serpent who still resides in the rockhole further into the lake. The serpent who departs from his abode each day in search of food is one who can't see but has a power in smell, who must be appeased by the ritual of washing under one's arms. This was a narrative of prophetic proportions involving characters who created the moral framework for people to live by, thus rendering the ultimate oral creationist history that has survived for thousands of years. The energy radiating from Timo was tangible. The transference of knowledge and ownership seemed complete and as he turned back toward the car he looked at me and said "Lake Baker. I'm the boss now".



# TIMO HOGAN

## Biography

Timo grew up with stories of life in the Spinifex Lands. His mother and family dug themselves into the sand dunes to try to avoid the smoke from the Maralinga atomic bomb. Before he was born she walked to a location close to Tjuntjuntjara and found a pile of tin meat left by the patrol officer. A white man came and picked all the people up in an old Landrover and drove them into Cundeelee Mission. Later his mother was driven from Cundeelee to the old hospital in Kalgoorlie for Timo's birth in 1973.

Timo spent his formative years with his father, Neville McCarthur and his stepmother Alkawari at Mt Margaret, and later at Warburton, closer to his father's traditional lands. Once back in country Timo's father took him to all the culturally significant places. He wanted to introduce him to the country, to the spirit caretakers and teach him the law. "My father took me to Lake Baker, all around, rockhole and all. I know all these places but I can't show them. Millmillpa (dangerously sacred). I'm taking over this country now, as my father is getting old. I'm the only son and people say we are like twins, my father and me. We look the same. I know how to use spears – he taught me everything.

Timo went through Men's Business initiation at Warburton. The group travelled down to Tjuntjuntjara on the business run. "My father's really a Spinifex Man. His brothers are Hogan and Jamieson". After going through business Timo settled in Tjuntjuntjara and lived with his mother. His father visited regularly before he got too old to make the long journey.

For a brief period, Timo lived at Kalka as his mother married a man from there. He did his first canvas, a painting of Lake Baker with Ninuku Artists in 2004. After a long break of nearly 10 years he started painting again. Painting his country, the vast salt lake, the place he now has cultural obligations to look after. A place of power and danger. "I've rediscovered my love for painting. I do painting all the time now. I'm painting my country Lake Baker."

### GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2020 Spinifex Artists - On Our Country, Japingka gallery fremantle. W.A.
- 2020 Paris Art Fair in conjunction with ArtKelch Gallery, Paris, France.
- 2020 37th Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum and Art Gallery of NT. Darwin. NT
- 2019 Journey through Culture, for Tarnanthi Festival in conjunction with Redot Gallery and nthspace Adelaide
- 2019 DesertMob 2019, Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs, Northern Territory.
- 2019 36th Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum and Art Gallery of NT. Darwin. NT
- 2019 Explosion, Aboriginal Signature Gallery, Brussels, Belgium.
- 2018 Spinifex People Spinifex Land - A Collection of Fine Spinifex Indigenous Art, ReDot Fine Art Gallery, Singapore. 2018 - In Kürze: Pila Nguruku Kapi Walkatjara - Painted Waters of Spinifex Country, Artkelch, Skulpturenpark Wesenberg| Künstler Bei Wu, Wesenberg (near Berlin) Germany
- 2017 Wüste - Meer - Schpfermythen ArtKelch Gallery presented at The Rautenstrauch-Joest Museum Cologne, Germany.
- 2017 Spinifex Arts 20th Anniversary, Japingka Gallery, Fremantle. WA.
- 2016 Pila Nguratja - In Spinifex Country Vivien Anderson Gallery, Melbourne
- 2016 Rawa Nyinanyi- Unbroken. Outstation Gallery, Darwin. N.T.
- 2016 Revealed Emerging Aboriginal Artists of WA, Fremantle Arts Centre, Fremantle, W.A.
- 2013 Kuwaritja - New Works of the Spinifex People Outstation Gallery, Darwin, Northern Territory."



### COLLECTIONS

Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, NSW

### AWARDS

- 2020 Finalist 37th Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award, Museums and Art Galleries, Darwin, NT
- 2019 Finalist 36th Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award, Museums and Art Galleries, Darwin, NT
- 2017 Finalist Port Hedland Art Awards

Timo Hogan  
Photo by Brian Hallett









*Lake Baker*  
2017  
acrylic on canvas  
137 x 110 cm  
17-308

**SOLD**



*Lake Baker*  
2019  
acrylic on linen  
230 x 200 cm  
19-396

**SOLD**





*Lake Baker*  
2019  
acrylic on linen  
230 x 200 cm  
19-430

**\$16,000**





*Lake Baker*  
2019  
acrylic on linen  
230 x 200 cm  
19-432

**SOLD**





*Lake Baker*  
2019  
acrylic on linen  
230 x 200 cm  
19-433

**SOLD**

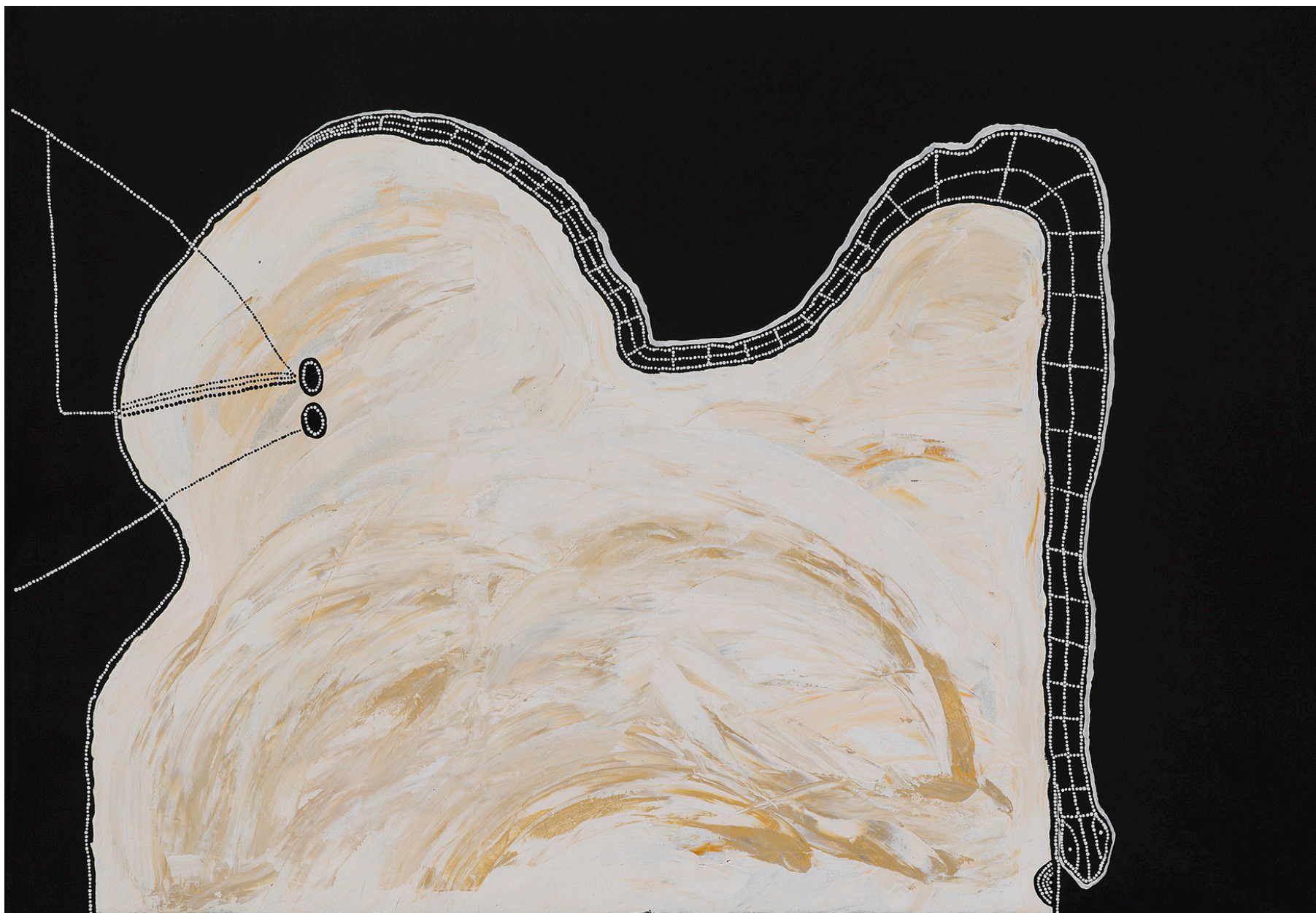




*Lake Baker*  
2020  
acrylic on linen  
110 x 85 cm  
20-122

**SOLD**





*Lake Baker*  
2020  
acrylic on linen  
200 x 137 cm  
20-125

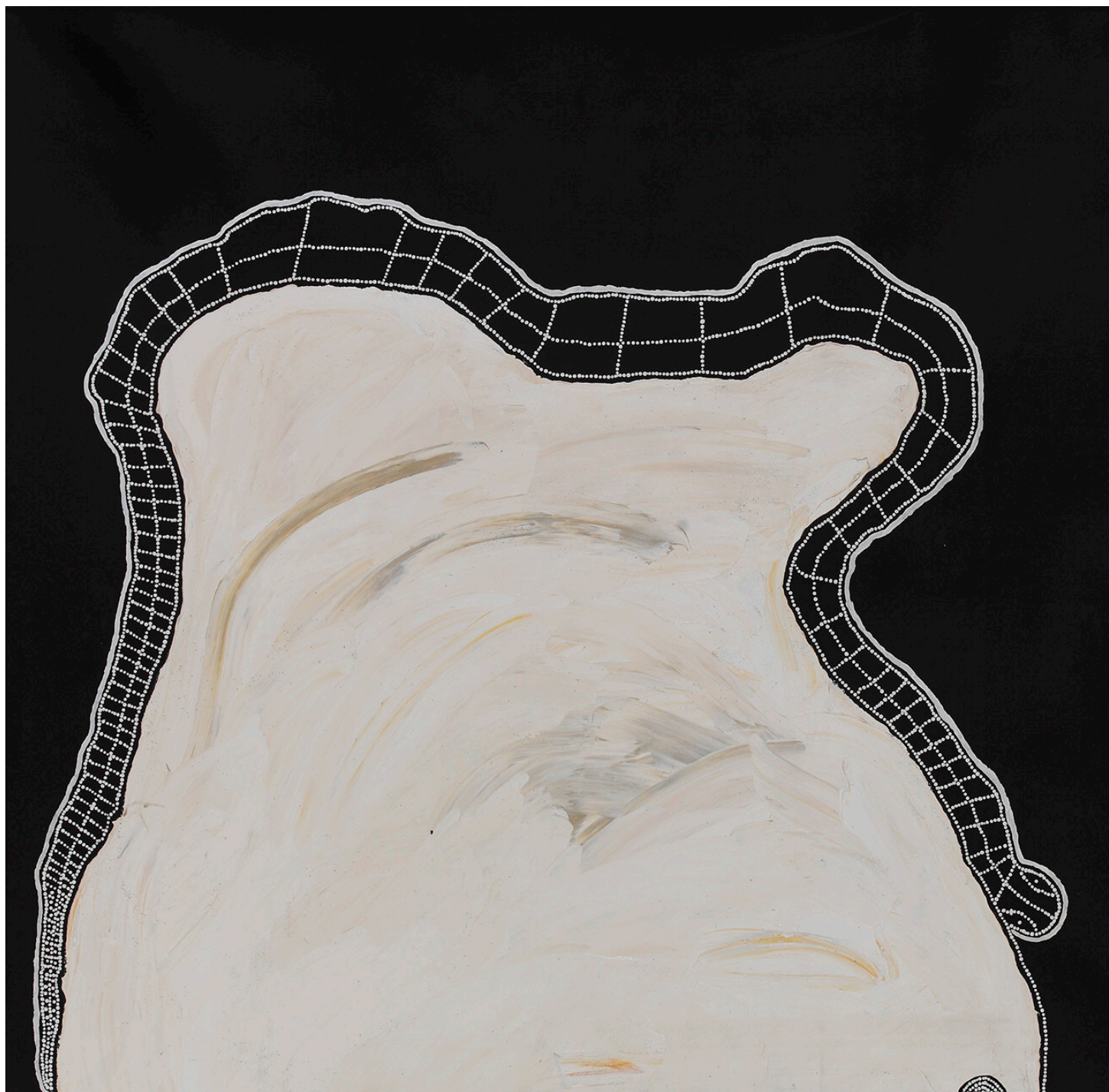
**SOLD**





Photo by Amanda Dent





*Lake Baker*  
2020  
acrylic on linen  
137 x 140 cm  
20-191

**SOLD**



*Lake Baker*  
2020  
acrylic on linen  
137 x 140 cm  
20-192 **\$7,500 - reserved**





*Lake Baker*  
2021  
acrylic on linen  
200 x 137 cm  
21-13

**SOLD**



*Lake Baker*  
2021  
acrylic on linen  
200 x 137 cm  
21-14

**SOLD**

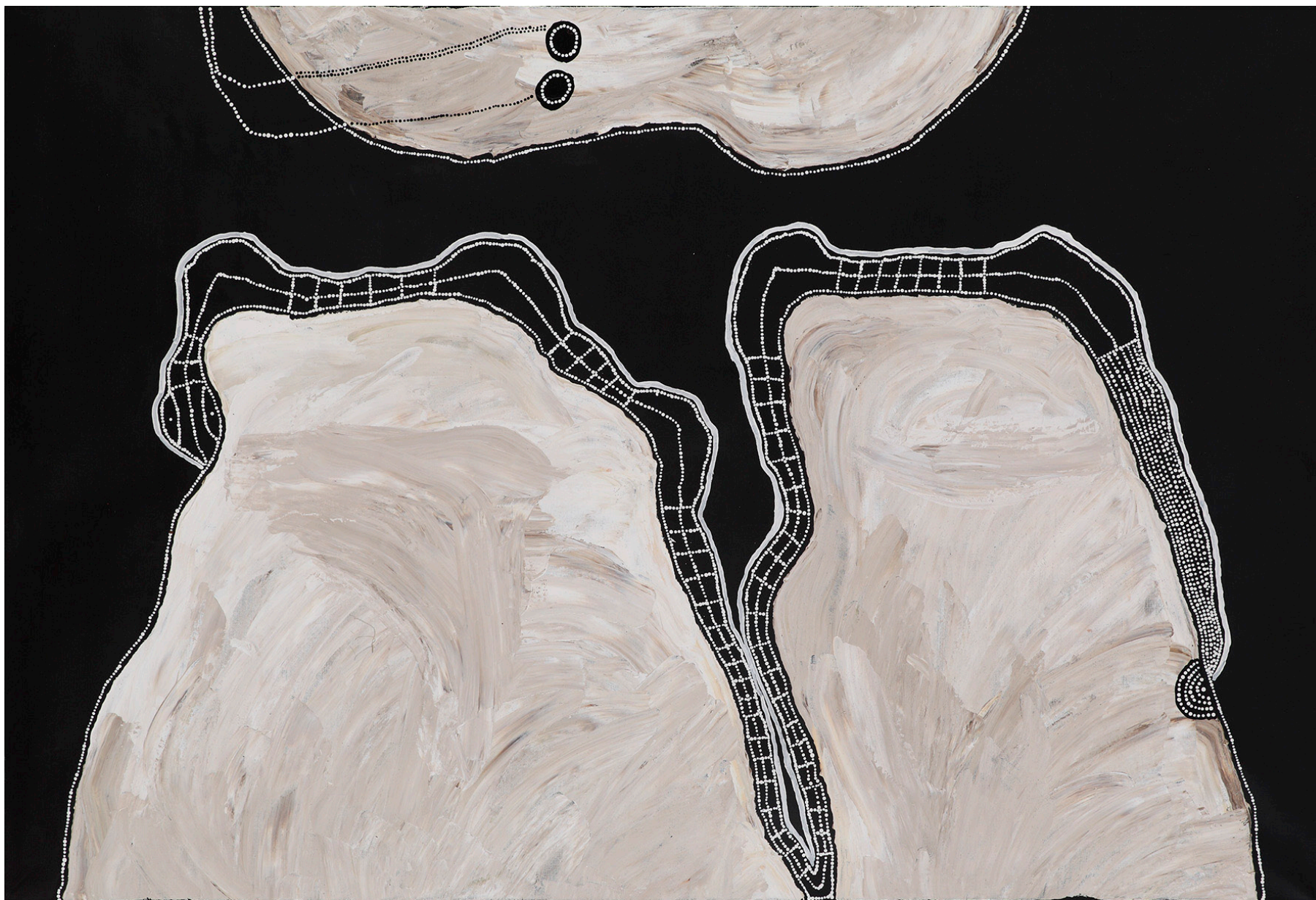




*Lake Baker*  
2021  
acrylic on linen  
290 x 200 cm  
21-42

RESERVED BY INSTITUTION





*Lake Baker*  
2021  
acrylic on linen  
200 x 137 cm  
21-109

**SOLD**





*Lake Baker*  
2021  
acrylic on linen  
200 x 137 cm  
21-110

**SOLD**





Photo by Stephen Oxenbury





*Lake Baker*  
2021  
acrylic on linen  
137 x 200 cm  
21-112

**SOLD**





*Lake Baker*  
2021  
acrylic on linen  
200 x 137 cm  
21-114

**SOLD**





*Lake Baker*  
2021  
acrylic on linen  
230 x 200 cm  
21-118

**SOLD**

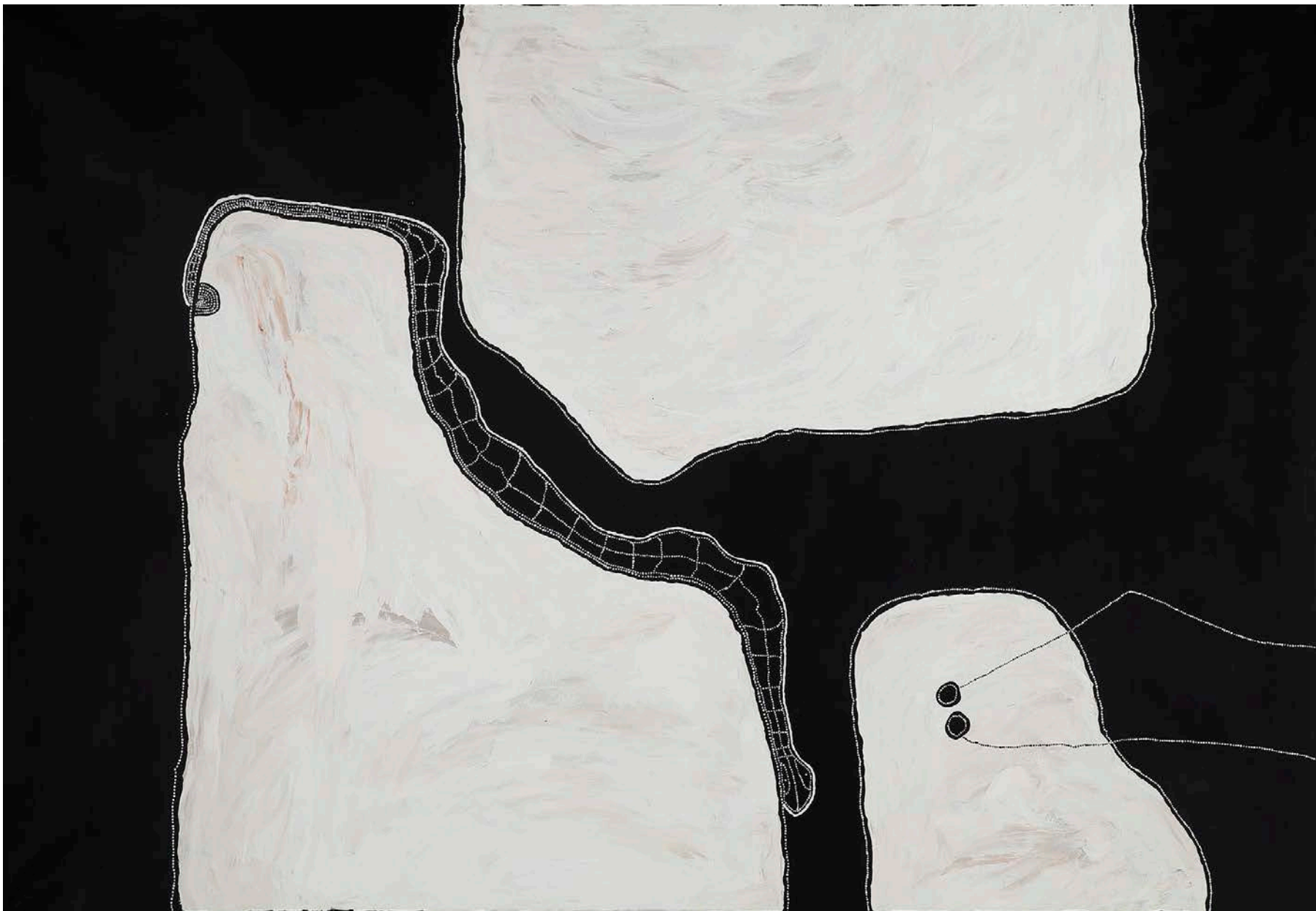




*Lake Baker*  
2021  
acrylic on linen  
230 x 200 cm  
21-168

**\$16,000**





*Lake Baker*  
2021  
acrylic on linen  
290 x 200 cm  
21-169 RESERVED BY INSTITUTION





*Lake Baker*  
2021  
acrylic on linen  
290 x 200 cm  
21-170    RESERVED BY INSTITUTION





*Lake Baker*  
2021  
acrylic on linen  
200 x 137 cm  
21-171

**\$9,500**





For further information or to see high resolution images please contact the gallery.

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