

Basic Detail Report



00054746

Title

Mokuy Spirit

Date

2015

Primary Maker

Nawurapu Wunungmurra

Medium

Ochre on cotton wood

Dimensions

Overall: 1980 × 130 × 120 mm, 1.85 kg

Name

Sculpture

History

The Yolŋu conception of life is that the spirit is eternal. We all have a spirit and once our bodies die that spirit's journey continues. Ceremonies are still practiced that guide and protect that spirit's journey to the reservoir of souls particular to that clan identity from which it emerged. The grief that people feel in death is equated in Yolŋu songs with the sadness at the departure of the Macassans when they leave Northeast Arnhem land on the south easterly Dhimurru wind of May/June. The imagery of the setting sun striking the clouds on the

horizon and colouring them pink is like the departing spirit and equated with the red Prau sails disappearing over the horizon. A life is over. A season is finished. Families are separated. Nawurapu Wunungmurra says about this work; "The mokuy or nanuk (spirits) come in together, Dhuwa and Yirritja to the sacred ground called Balambala, past Gangan, the other side for all the mokuy to get together The spirits go there and that's where they make the yidaki sound It's like showing Yukuwa (sacred yam emblem) and Morning Star feathers - they are different. Like same goes with yidaki, different sounds for Yirritja and Dhuwa. The Yirritja and Dhuwa play yidaki to call in the Mokuy to the same ground Balambala The Yirritja mokuy come in on the birds, djilawurr (scub fowl) and bugutj-bugutj (banded fruit dove). The Dhuwa mokuy they come in from rangi side (saltwater) "