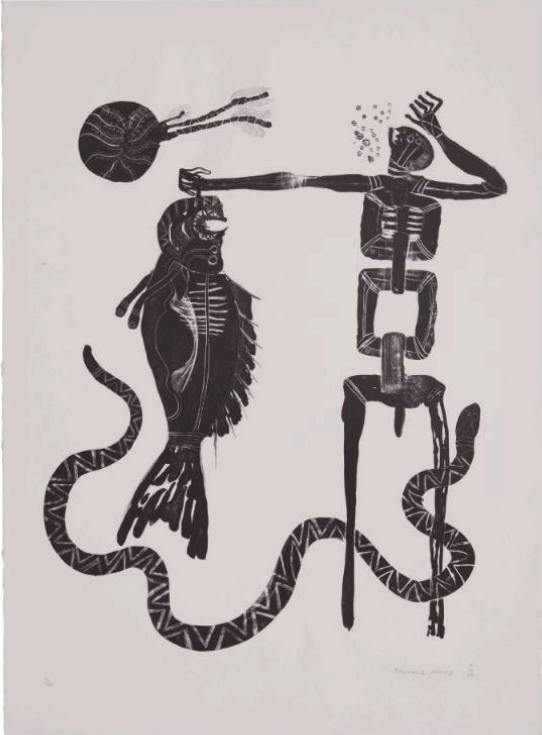


Basic Detail Report



00005989

Title

Argoonie Doowie - the catching of the dream

Date

1987

Primary Maker

Arone Raymond John Meeks

Medium

Ink on paper

Dimensions

Overall: 761 x 560 mm

Name

Lithograph

History

Arone Raymond Meeks was born in 1957 in Laura, Queensland. Meeks spent much of his childhood in El-Arish, Queensland before moving to Sydney to study art at Alexander Mackie College. After graduating in 1980, he undertook postgraduate studies in Traditional Art and Culture on Mornington Island. By 1984, he had completed a Bachelor of Visual Arts at the City Arts Institute in Sydney. During his time studying, Meeks began printmaking and drew inspiration from the traditional cave art of Cape York, around his country in Laura. In 1983, he was the first Indigenous Australian to be awarded an artist-in-residence at Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris. Throughout the 1990s, he was represented in exhibitions in galleries across the globe including Portsmouth, Glasgow, Lyons, Toulouse, Tokyo, Boston and Santa Fe. In addition to this, Meeks became well known for his illustrations for children's books including 'When the World Was New' (1988), 'This is Still a Rainbow Snake Country' (1988) and 'Pheasant and Kingfisher' (1994). In 1992, he won UNICEF's Erza Jack Keats Award for International Excellence in Children's Book Illustration. Meeks is continually creating new work and currently exhibits in galleries in Sydney and Cairns. This lithograph depicts a range of themes intrinsic to Aboriginal culture and belief systems. The jellyfish was an important food source in northern Australia as well as a common feature in ancestral stories. The work is a metaphor for Aboriginal subjugation and has been described in conjunction with Aboriginal spirituality. Throughout it, 'spirits occupy barramundi and move freely' in contrast with the Aboriginal man who is 'enslaved'. Jennifer Isaacs once described Arone Meeks, the origins of his name and his relationship with the land and its waterways, in her Preface to 'Common Ground Exhibition catalogue', Drill Hall Gallery, June 1997: 'It was clear to Thancoupie from the beginning that Raymond Meeks was Arone the black crane: that large sinuous bird that alights gently on overhanging trees along water ways, bending its long neck to the water,

solitary, seeking. The traditional stories were taught to Thancoupie by her aunty, Maethouone, and in time Thancoupie bestowed this name on Raymond Meeks.'