

# onespace

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Acknowledgements and thanks to:

Paloma Ramos, Theo Tremblay, Trish Barnard,  
Scott Campbell, 3E Innovative, Simon Brigden,  
Alicia Hollier, Benjamin Werner, Mick Richards  
Photography, Evie's Editing Services, Matt Rees  
Signs and Amanda Burke Creative.



Daniel O'Shane, *Taap (Mullet)*, 2014, Vinylcut print, edition 9/35, 80 x 54cm overall paper dimension, 75.5 x 27.5cm image dimension (unframed).  
Photo: Mick Richards.

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## From a Northern Canopy

recent work by Michael Boiyool Anning & Daniel O'Shane

23 August – 16 September 2017



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Daniel O'Shane, *Deger (Dugong)*, 2014, Vinyl-cut print, edition 20/35, 48 x 55cm overall paper dimension, 21.5 x 26.5cm image dimension (unframed). Photo: Mick Richards.

## From a Northern Canopy: recent works by Michael Boiyool Anning & Daniel O'Shane

Onespace Gallery, in collaboration with Canopy Art Centre (Canopy) and Indigenous research consultant Trish Barnard, is delighted to present a showcase exhibition of two North Queensland Artists: Yidinji man **Michael Boiyool Anning** and Kuku Yalanji, Miriam Mer, and Kulkagal man **Daniel O'Shane**. This exhibition derives from the high-quality work seen at the 2017 Cairns Indigenous Art Fair (CIAF 2017) and is a first-time opportunity for Onespace to work with Canopy and its local partners to present such high-calibre work in Brisbane.

This exhibition emanates from the exposure both Onespace Directors had at CIAF 2017 to two impressive bodies of work. Both were on display on behalf of Canopy Art Centre, either at their Grafton Street location in Cairns or at the Art Fair itself at the Cairns Cruise Liner Terminal. The works of both artists are founded in deep cultural traditions but are realised through contemporary modes of expression. They were stand-outs among the Fair's highly talented field of Tropical North Queensland artists and its numerous visual arts offerings in associated venues. Since its inception, Onespace's programming vision has been to create a portal in Brisbane for art practice from Northern Queensland, and *From a Northern Canopy* delivers on that commitment.

Canopy, located in the heart of Cairns' CBD, is one of the key focal points of Indigenous and non-Indigenous art from North Queensland. The Centre is dedicated to showcasing the varied works of local artistic practitioners and is managed and programmed by Paloma Ramos and Theo Tremblay. It provides valuable technical mentorship, skills development, and an affordable professional exhibition space. Editions Tremblay Print Workshop is based out of Canopy, and Master Printer Tremblay has an outstanding reputation in the Australian art world. The workshop provides a space of education on various printmaking techniques, with the artists working under the tutelage of Tremblay himself.

One of these artists is Daniel O'Shane (b. 1990), an emerging practitioner who is represented by Canopy and is one of the North's foremost young creatives. He has developed his own unique *minarr/warr* (traditional patterning) and was the recipient of the 2017 CIAF People's Choice Award for his work *ii ra mer ene Gawei (the sound of tears and Gawei)*, 2017, which is proudly featured in this exhibition. Daniel also received the 2016 National Works on Paper Prize (Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery), with the judges observing that his work was "remarkably accomplished and monumental in scale ... Coming out of the histories of carving pearl shell, [and that] the intricacy of the cutting in this work is simply amazing". In 2015, O'Shane received the Silk Cut Award for Linocut Prints, with the judges commenting on how his "powerful work immediately impressed", how it "demonstrates a high level of technical competency", and how it was "gestural and compelling ... a clear stand out in a strong line up".



Joining him in *From a Northern Canopy* is Michael Boiyool Anning (b. 1955), an established Tropical North Queensland rainforest artist who is held in many public and private collections. After an absence of several years from the wider art world, Anning made his return at CIAF 2017 with his exhibition *Gijar gunda big-uun* presented at Canopy. His work is held in the collections of QAGOMA (which purchased twenty of his rainforest shields between 2000 and 2004), the Queensland Museum, and Cairns Regional Gallery. This exhibition marks Anning's re-emergence into the Brisbane art world after an eight-year absence.

As Anning's agent Trish Barnard recounts, he is "recognised as the foremost Indigenous artist in Queensland to revive a unique tradition of making artefacts such as *Big-uun* (shields), that were once used as weapons by the Yidinji people, and *Nalan Gugal* (firemakers). He was the first Yidinji man to reinvigorate shield making." Anning has remarked on how he paints "according to tradition" and that he hasn't "made-up" the styles we see represented on his artefacts—aside from the occasional inclusion of dots which were not on some of his original designs.

In this exhibition, Anning's painterly fields of intense and contrasting ochre tones meet O'Shane's predominantly black-and-white printmaking process. One that confidently explores positive and negative space. Though, O'Shane's recent work also includes an added layer of hand-coloured pastel tones that further illuminate his intricate narratives. The geometric separation of space in Anning's rainforest objects meet the *warr* lines and figures of O'Shane's Torres Strait prints. These divergent visual styles are both predicated on the telling of cultural stories, an attesting to the importance of the natural environment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and the importance of continuing culture through visual art. The artists' works are equally complex, with cultural detail inscribed into the visual surfaces on display.

This exhibition exemplifies the diversity of Tropical North Queensland artmaking practices while also representing an exciting alignment between two artists working at opposite ends of the professional spectrum. Additionally, it highlights the benefits for audiences in Brisbane of co-operation between two visual arts operations, Canopy Art Centre and Onespace Gallery, situated at two geographical poles of the State.

Simon Brigden

*This exhibition exemplifies the diversity of Tropical North Queensland artmaking practices while also representing an exciting alignment between two artists working at opposite ends of the professional spectrum.*



Left: Michael Boiyool Anning, *Firemaker - Nalan (board) with Gugal (sticks)*, 2017, natural ochres and charcoal on softwood rainforest timber, with twined bush string, 40 x 80cm. Photo: Mick Richards.

Right: Michael Boiyool Anning, *Shield - Dugubil (Bark containers) design*, natural ochres and charcoal on softwood rainforest timber, 90 x 40 x 7.5cm. Photo: Mick Richards.