



Teho Ropeyarn

onespace

Middle World: Every change a continuation, every season a story

12 – 20 December 2025 & 12 – 24 January 2026

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ONESPACE

Onespace Exhibition Dates | 12 – 20 December 2025 & 12 – 24 January 2026 (Please note the gallery is closed over Christmas)

Opening Event | 13 December 2025, 5 – 7pm | Artist Talk 4 – 5pm

Onespace Gallery Hours | Tuesday to Friday 10am – 5pm, Saturday 12pm – 5pm

Carving his love for Country, the exhibition *Middle World: Every change a continuation, every season a story* sees Teho Ropeyarn illustrate the transient seasons of Cape York. With organic design, Ropeyarn draws on the interface of cultural memory and time to traverse the landscape in its wet, dry, and burnt form.

Essay writer, Shonae Hobson states that:

“Middle World is a spiritual metaphor that speaks to how First Nations people understand and interact with Country. The exhibition is deeply rooted in themes of cultural memory, connection to place, and the intimate, interwoven stories that are passed down by family and community. In *Middle World*, Ropeyarn draws from his childhood memories of travelling across the Peninsula Development Road (PDR) in Cape York. Stretching an expansive 571 kilometres from Lakeland to the tip of Australia, the PDR remains one of Australia’s last great wilderness tracks.”



Image: Sol Studio. Alicia J. Courtesy of the Artist and Onespace.

Teho Ropeyarn

Middle World: Every change a continuation, every season a story

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Photo: Teho Ropeyarn. Image: Ben Searcy. Courtesy of the artist and The Art Gallery of South Australia.

Teho Ropeyarn is an artist and curator from Injinoo, Cape York Peninsula, and is currently based in Cairns, Queensland. Born in Mount Isa in 1988, he holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the College of Fine Arts (UNSW) in Sydney. Ropeyarn is descended from the Angkamuthi and Yadhaykana clans from Injinoo on the mainland, Badu, Moa and Murray Island in the Torres Strait; Woppaburra people (Great Keppel Island) and Batchulla people (K'gari). Having lived in Injinoo most of his life, his practice reflects his father's Aboriginal heritage to keep what is remaining alive.

His work focuses on preserving and documenting permitted stories and knowledge passed down from Elders and recognises the four clan groups that make up the Injinoo peoples. His exquisite vinyl cut prints explore several traditional and historical stories including significant events, dreaming sites, totems, and ceremonial body designs encompassing a spiritual connection to Country and community on both land and sea. The rhythm, patterns, and imagery in his work often utilise elements from body markings derived from this region depicted with a contemporary lens. His imagery and stories connect Ropeyarn's spirit of the work to his people and Country.

Teho Ropeyarn's works have been acquired by prestigious institutions and collections including the National Gallery of Australia, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Art Gallery of South Australia and the Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art (QAGOMA). His work has also been curated into major exhibitions across Australia and abroad including: Too Deadly: Ten Years of Tarnanthi, 2025, AGSA; 23rd Biennale of Sydney, 2022; Tarnanthi 2021, Art Gallery of South Australia; Ink Master's 3rd Biennial Print Exhibition, Cairns, 2016; 8th International Printmaking Biennial of Douro, Portugal, 2016; GOMA-Q, Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, 2015; Primavera 2012, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, 2012; and 11th Nationwide Academies of Fine Arts Printmaking Biennial, Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts, China, 2012.

He has been the recipient of several grants, prizes and awards, nationally and internationally, including: the Queen Sonja Print Award, Norway, 2022 [Finalist]; National Works on Paper 2022, MPRAG [Acquired]; Geelong Acquisitive Print Award, 2021 [Winner]; Fremantle Print Award Exhibition, Fremantle Art Centre, 2016; National Works on Paper Award, Mornington Peninsula Regional Art, 2014; 30th Telstra NATSIAA Awards, MAGNT, 2013 [Winner - Works on Paper]; 29th Telstra NATSIAA Awards, MAGNT, 2012 [Finalist - Works on Paper]; Wollotuka Acquisitive Art Prize, University of Newcastle, 2012.

The landscapes of Cape York Peninsula—its rugged terrains, unique geographical features and ever-shifting seasonal patterns—have long captured the imagination and artistic output of some of Australia’s most celebrated landscape artists. Fred Williams, Dick Roughsey and Russell Drysdale have all interpreted its scale, isolation and atmospheric force through their distinct visual languages. For Injinoo artist Teho Ropeyarn, Cape York is not a distant subject but his home. His memories and lived experiences of travelling across this vast country form the premise for his latest body of work, *Middle World: Every change a continuation, every season a story*.

Middle World is a spiritual metaphor that speaks to how First Nations people understand and interact with Country. The exhibition is deeply rooted in themes of cultural memory, connection to place, and the intimate, interwoven stories that are passed down by family and community. In *Middle World*, Ropeyarn draws from his childhood memories of travelling across the Peninsula Development Road (PDR) in Cape York. Stretching an expansive 571 kilometres from Lakeland to the tip of Australia, the PDR remains one of Australia’s last great wilderness tracks. As the gateway to the Torres Strait, the track is known for its shifting plains of red dirt, thick bushlands, and mighty river systems that flood for weeks on end during the wet season. Known as the Old Telegraph Track, the road was originally constructed to ensure communication links between remote northern communities and the rest of Australia, completed in 1887.

As someone who grew up in Cape York in the early 1990s, Ropeyarn is no stranger to the transient nature of the country’s seasons, including its unforgiving weather patterns and diverse flora and fauna.

Cape York has provided a reference point for many of his early works including his *Cape York Lily series* (2022) and more recently, *Ungganju Ana (going north to Cape York Peninsula)* (2025), which comprises six panels of aerial drone photographs of the PDR overlaid with Ropeyarn’s distinctive body marking designs. As an extension of both series, *Middle World* encompasses the uniqueness of this Country and reinforces the artist’s process of documenting stories, life experiences, history, developments and the colonial impact on Cape York, its land and its people.

Making the long journey from his hometown of Injinoo to Cairns, Ropeyarn recalls childhood memories gazing out the back window of the old Troopy at the Country unfolding before him. As he explains:

Memory is the main driver for this exhibition, reflecting on those years travelling with family, listening to Saltwater Band, the Eagles, Bee Gees and Cold Chisel on old cassettes...driving the Old Telegraph Track with mum, dad and my siblings. Looking out the window, these works capture what you saw looking out the small troopy sliding window and seeing the country in all its vastness pass by.¹

Ropeyarn imbues a unique sensibility to these works, encapsulating the landscape as a network of intricate relationships between people, seasons and memory. His attention is drawn not to the grand spectacle of wilderness as seen through an ‘outsiders’ lens, but to the culturally charged markers that guide movement across the Cape: the colour changes in the soil, the shift in vegetation, the signs that tell you when rain is coming or when fire has passed.

He is interested in the conflicting sites of change and expressing those through the printmaking process: “The Country is burnt on one side, and the other side is green and flourishing. The focus is, I think, visually responds to what we see when we drive the PDR at certain times of the year and the works capture those changes.”

In *Burnt Country*, Ropeyarn explores these contrasting shifts through his use of colour and printing processes, contrasting vibrant greens that show the dense vegetation after the rain with deep charcoals that allude to the burnt trunks and ash left at the end of bushfire season. He is even interested in depicting the dust that blankets the trees: “When you leave the sealed road and enter the dirt road, whichever way the wind is blowing, the dust off the road ends up blanketing the trees in that section. This is captured through the printing process.” Ropeyarn has worked in printmaking since 2010, continually expanding his technical and conceptual approach into various formats. For this series, he collaborated with master printmaker Theo Tremblay, exploring the possibilities of ink and pressure to create complex tonal variations and atmospheric shifts that animate each print. Each piece in *Middle World* is characterised by a specific set of patterns, movements and rhythms, reflecting certain hours of the day ‘sunset’ or seasons ‘wet to dry’.

The exhibition speaks to the importance of Cape York as one of the last great wildernesses in Australia—a place defined not only by its vastness, but also by the stories, knowledge and people who have shaped, lived and defined it for generations. Its uniqueness, changes, and colours are captured by Ropeyarn with great sensitivity. Through these works, he invites audiences to view Cape York not as scenery but as a living cultural landscape.

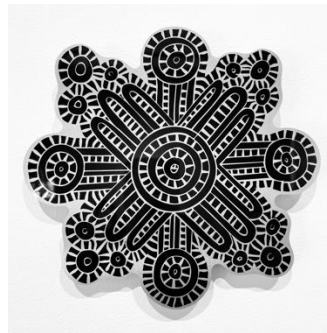
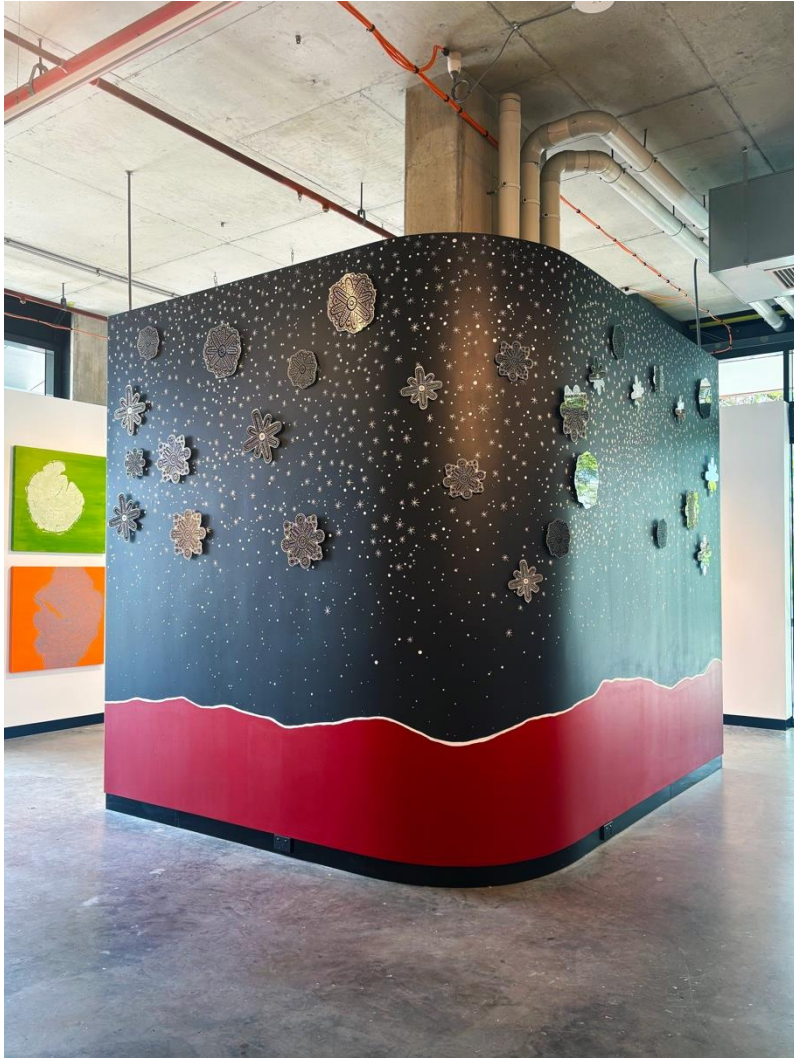
Shonae Hobson

¹ All quotes from the artist are taken from an email to the author, 16 November 2025.

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Teho Ropeyarn

Star #1-3, 2025

Dye-sublimation on aluminium

Large: 30 x 30cm | \$350 each

Small: 20 x 20cm | \$500 each

Photo: Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.

Teho Ropeyarn

Unggoonggu achah (Star sky), 2025

Installation

POA

Photo: Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



Teho Ropeyarn

Cape York, Peninsula Development Road (State I), 2025

Vinyl-cut print, 100cm x 160cm (block), 117cm x 177cm (paper)

2AP + Edition of 10

\$7,500 (unframed) | \$9,500 (framed)

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



Teho Ropeyarn

Cape York, Peninsula Development Road – Burnt Country (State II), 2025

Vinyl-cut print, 100cm x 160cm (block), 117cm x 177cm (paper)

2AP + Edition of 10

\$7,500 (unframed) | \$9,500 (framed)

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



Teho Ropeyarn

Cape York, Peninsula Development Road - Night-Time Drive (State III), 2025

Vinyl-cut print, 100cm x 160cm (block), 117cm x 177cm (paper)

2AP + Edition of 10

\$7,500 (unframed) | \$9,500 (framed)

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



Teho Ropeyarn

Cape York, Peninsula Development Road - Dusty Road (State IV), 2025

Vinyl-cut print, 100cm x 160cm (block), 117cm x 177cm (paper)

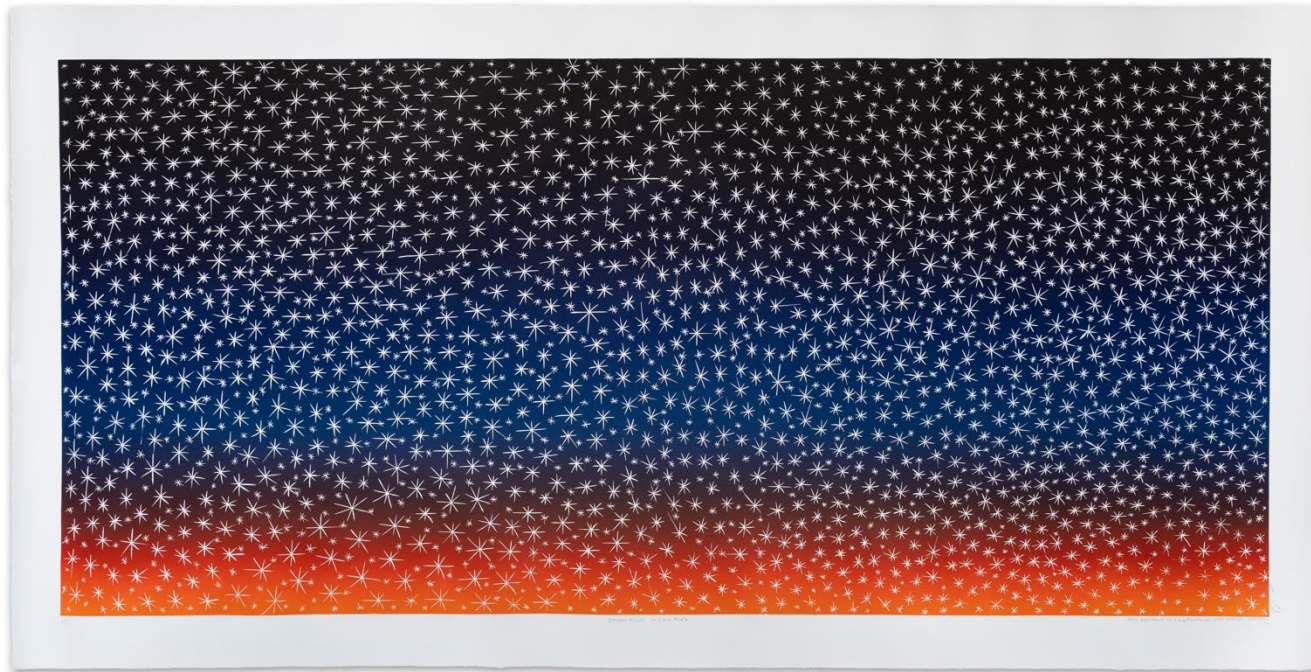
2AP + Edition of 10

\$7,500 (unframed) | \$9,500 (framed)

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



Detail: Cape York, Peninsula Development Road – Dusty Road (State IV), 2025, vinyl- cut print, 117 x 177cm. 2AP + Edition of 10.
Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



Teho Ropeyarn and Manjal Brady

Starry Night in Cape York, 2025

Vinyl-cut print, 90cm x 196cm (block), 107cm x 213cm (paper) 2AP + Edition of 5

\$6,500 (unframed) | \$8,500 (framed)

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



Teho Ropeyarn

Rain cloud blue sky (State I), 2025

Vinyl-cut print, 45cm x 74cm (block), 72cm x 101cm (paper)

2AP + Edition of 20

\$3,000 (unframed) | \$4,000 (framed)

Photo: Michael Marzik. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



Teho Ropeyarn

From wet to dry (State II), 2025

Vinyl-cut print, 45cm x 74cm (block), 72cm x 101cm (paper)

2AP + Edition of 20

\$3,000 (unframed) | \$4,000 (framed)

Photo: Michael Marzik. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



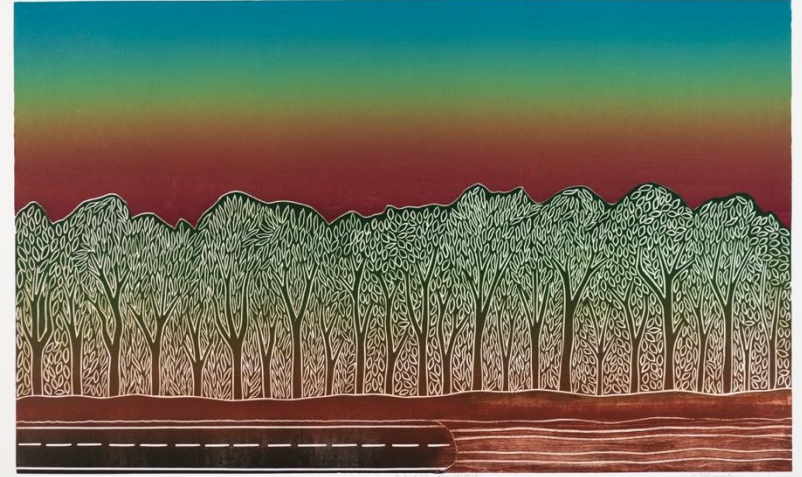
Sunset Country (State III), 2025

Vinyl-cut print, 45cm x 74cm (block), 72cm x 101cm (paper)

2AP + Edition of 20

\$3,000 (unframed) | \$4,000 (framed)

Photo: Michael Marzik. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



Sunrise Country (State IV), 2025

Vinyl-cut print, 45cm x 74cm (block), 72cm x 101cm (paper)

2AP + Edition of 20

\$3,000 (unframed) | \$4,000 (framed)

Photo: Michael Marzik. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



Image: Sol Studio. Alicia J. Courtesy of the Artist and Onespace.

Theo Tremblay is a pioneer of collaborative printmaking and publishing, mentoring Aboriginal and Zenadh Kes (Torres Strait) artists in a range of print mediums. He specializes in etching, lithography, relief printing, mono-print and screen-printing.

Many of the works created in the Editions Tremblay workshop have been acquired by major galleries and museums in Australia and internationally.

Essay writer Shoane Hobson states: 'Ropeyarn has worked in printmaking since 2010, continually expanding his technical and conceptual approach into various formats. For this series, he collaborated with master printmaker Theo Tremblay, exploring the possibilities of ink and pressure to create complex tonal variations and atmospheric shifts that animate each print.'

Onespace is a Brisbane-based gallery that presents and sells contemporary art, including work by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists.

We curate an exhibition program exploring diverse themes and media, showcasing emerging, mid-career and established artists whose works inform, stimulate and challenge. Onespace welcomes you to engage with the artists and artworks we exhibit.

Onespace is uniquely located adjacent to Maiwar (Brisbane river) beneath the Spice Apartments near the Go Between Bridge in South Brisbane. We are proudly surrounded by the dynamic buzz of the Queensland cultural precinct that is significant to this area of Brisbane.

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Director, Jodie Cox: jodie@onespace.com.au

Gallery Manager, Demi Conrad: demi@onespace.com.au

Gallery Assistant, Poppy Saines: poppy@onespace.com.au

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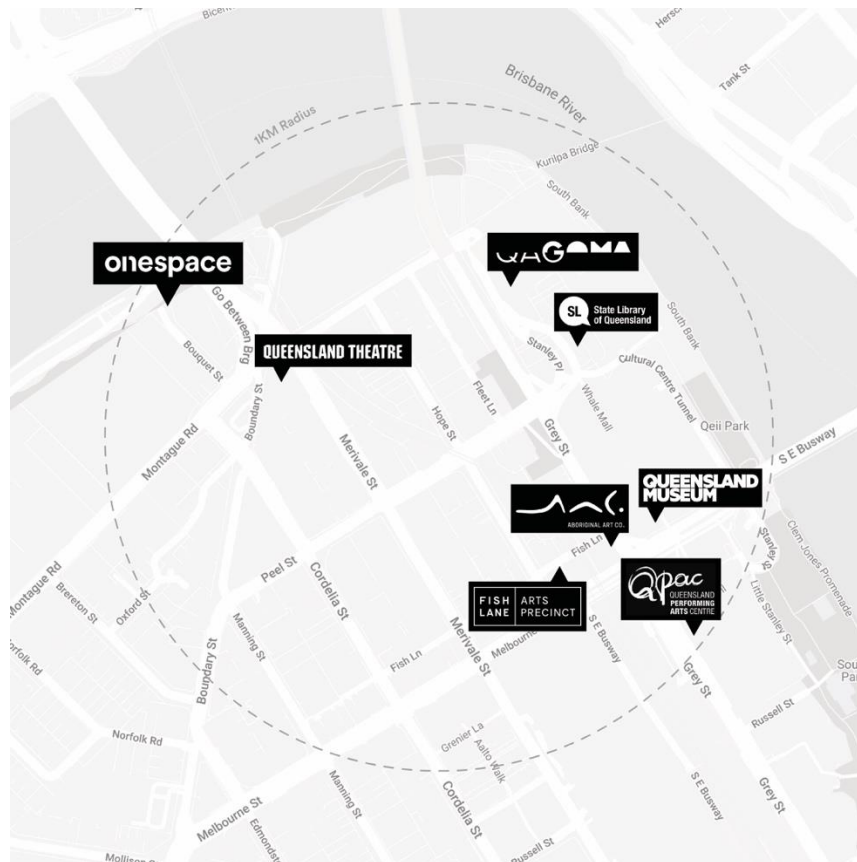
onespace.com.au

@onespace.au

Onespace Gallery Hours:

Wednesday to Friday 10am – 5pm, Saturday 12pm – 5pm

25A Bouquet Street, South Brisbane Q 4101 Australia



Onespace acknowledges the traditional custodians of Country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to the land, waters, culture and community. We pay our respects to elders past and present.