

# marina murdilnga

Sets of parallel geometric lines, planes of colour and fibrous structures are the material basis of Marina Murdilnga's woven sculpture repertoire.

WORDS BY NICOLE FORESHEW

Marina Murdilnga has propelled the anatomy of fibre practice, and continues to inform a revolutionary movement within western Arnhem Land. Murdilnga's thinking or action by means of twining, looping, and weaving pandanus (*Pandanus spiralis*) structures is pushing the boundaries of three-dimensional form. This, and the work of her contemporaries, illuminate the current dialogue surrounding Indigenous design practice within Australia. In a recent film interview at Kubumi in western Arnhem Land (which is featured in the exhibition *Menagerie: Contemporary Indigenous Sculpture*), Marina Murdilnga takes us beyond her production process, connecting lucid ideas with a clear vision of continuing a woven phenomenon.

*I started to weave yawkyawk first, then butterfly, frog and flying possum*

*I always get from my father's bark painting ... I was always painting with him from when I was five or six, my father was teaching me how to do the bark painting. My grandmother also teach me how to make that mat and string bag, basket and dilly bag, my mother's mother teach me and I am still going on.*

*When my father finished I was thinking and thinking, I want to make my own thinking, my father was always painting but I was thinking to myself I will make this way that is my own thinking, but I always think from bark painting from my father, from his painting.*

*I always do a hard job to get pandanus, get yellow, red, green, black, white, making yellow pink white brown. I am always making all kinds of colour, all different colour, I always make my colour from bark painting same as rarrk, I make that colour. This is my favourite spot to get the colour and pandanus. This is my home my country my father's country.*

*We are landowners to look after this home, I am staying with my family to look after this home, our father is gone so now we are here to look after this home Kubumi this is our place ... I will die here. ○*

*Menagerie: Contemporary Indigenous Sculpture is showing at Object Gallery and Australian Museum from 5 September to 15 November 2009.*

*Nicole Foreshew is a Wiradjuri woman currently living in Sydney. Menagerie: Contemporary Indigenous Sculpture is co-curated by Nicole Foreshew and Object's Associate Director Brian Parkes.*





**Top:**  
Marina Murdilinga at Kubumi,  
Arnhem Land, NT, 2009

**Bottom, left to bottom:**  
Coloured pandanus ready for  
production  
Marina Murdilinga weaving  
*Butterfly* (detail), 2009, twined  
pandanus fibre  
All photos: Nicole Foreshew.  
Courtesy the artist and  
Maningrida Arts and Culture.