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This catalogue is published by the Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art.

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Aboriginal art has captured the heart of Anne MacDougall. While travelling and living extensively in Australia and New Guinea, she became captivated by Aboriginal paintings and New Guinea woodcarvings. When MacDougall arrived in the outback, she was immediately struck by the force of the Aboriginals’ creative myths known as “Dreaming” or “Tjukurrpa.”

MacDougall describes “Dreaming” as the source of Aboriginal belief concerning creation, and physical and spiritual existence. It also provides a religious and social framework by which they are required to live. This code of behavior is referred to as the “law” and has been perpetuated through ceremonies involving song, dance and painting. It is central to the Aboriginal life.

The “Dreaming” is not simply confined to the past nor is it linear, but resonates through time.

“Dreaming” gives color and substance to these magnificent abstract canvases. MacDougall states that even though the materials used are modern acrylic paints, the content is traditional, mystical and ritualistic. The art is ceremonial in nature and the images are embodiments of the vital forces believed to exist in all living matter. When all creative forces are in motion, the spirits are activated, imparting us with some of mankind’s earliest philosophical and religious thoughts.

This exhibit presents breathtaking examples of the beautiful visual language passed down from generation to generation for more than 40,000 years. These mesmerizing designs and intricate patterns illustrate the inter-related bond between the Aboriginal people and their environment. Take note of the traditional symbols, enjoy the stories within each painting, pass on The Dreaming and reaffirm the connections with the land and animals.

The Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art is honored to present an exhibition of this prominent Australian Aboriginal Iconography. Traditional symbols used in storytelling, ground paintings and sometimes on the body to pass on The Dreaming and reaffirm the Aboriginals’ connections with their land and the animals.