

CHICAGO DEFENDER

Aboriginal art collection finds home in city's gallery district

by Earl Calloway

A fine arts gallery featuring Aboriginal art and artists, along with fine arts and contemporary works of Black Australians, recently moved into the River North area, 228 W. Superior. Inspired by cultural traditions, strong spiritual involvement and ancestral heritage, Australian Aboriginal art is a distinct and narrative art form that is frequently exemplified by vibrantly striking colors, dotted motifs and often intricate designs.

Founded by Sydney, Australia natives Rena and Manuel Pulido, the art collection features a wide array of work by many of Australia's established and emerging artists such as Gloria Petyarre, Dorothy Napangardi and Betsy Lewis. "We are tremendously excited to bring the work of these remarkable artists to Chicago.

Ironically we fell in love with contemporary Aboriginal art only after having moved to the United States," Rena Pulido said. "Growing up, I was exposed to only the Aboriginal art created for tourists-didgeridoos and painted masks. While living in Chicago, I discovered the beautiful complex, powerful and sophisticated art being created by so many largely untrained Indigenous people."

The art reflects centuries of Aboriginal tradition and history, providing rich insights into the lives of Jeannie Long Petyarre and Samantha Hobson. With a 1,500 square-foot studio in the heart of Chicago's Gallery District, Aboriginal Art Collection is able to provide a home to some of Australia's most decorated Aboriginal artists. Chicagoans are not only able to experience Aboriginal art firsthand but also learn the rich culture that influences it.

