

TRANSCRIPT

ACCESSIBLE LEARNING WITH DHAMBIT MUNUNGURR

This is a transcript of the video featured in the Accessible Learning with Dhambit Munungurr resource. You can view the video [here](#).

- 00:00:04 Hi. I'm Amy, and I'm a teacher at the National Gallery of Victoria in Melbourne, which is sometimes also called the NGV.
- 00:00:16 Did you know that the NGV is Australia's oldest public art gallery? There are lots of artworks from all over the world on display here for people to come and see and enjoy, including you.
- 00:00:31 And the best thing is it's free to visit and open every single day.
- 00:00:43 Today we are going to have a close look at one of the artworks that you might see if you were to visit the gallery.
- 00:00:54 We are looking at an artwork by a Yolŋu artist called Dhambit Munungurr, who is from a place called Yirrkala, which is a small Aboriginal community towards the top of Australia in north-eastern Arnhem Land.
- 00:01:15 This is Dhambit. She has been painting since she was a young woman. Both of her parents were artists too.
- 00:01:24 *Dhambit: I'm Dhambit and my parents are artists. That's why I'm an artist.*
- 00:01:42 Artists often make art that tells a story about them. This could be a painting, a drawing, a sculpture or so many other things.
- 00:01:54 What do you like to make art about? Maybe your family, or friends, or perhaps things you like, or even things you don't like.
- 00:02:09 I'm sure if I was to look at your artwork, I would learn something about you. We can learn a lot from art if we take our time and we look very carefully!
- 00:02:24 And that is what we're going to do now. Let's look carefully at this bark painting called 'Djirikitj-Wop!'.
- 00:02:39 Looking with your eyes, slowly look at the colours here.
- 00:02:51 I can see a lot of different blues. Some are really bright, some are light and some dark. I can also see black and white. Did you see them too?
- 00:03:13 When I look with my eyes, I see lots of bright blue that Dhambit has used all over the bark.
- 00:03:22 Can you see what I can see? Let's all look again.
- 00:03:40 The special thing about this colour is that Dhambit was the first Yolŋu artist to use blue in her artworks.

- 00:03:50 Can you see the difference? Dhambit's painting has blue and other paintings like this one by another Yolŋu artist, Barrupu Yunupingu, has earthy colours like brown, yellow, orange and white.
- 00:04:11 That's because Yolŋu artists, like Dhambit's Mum and Dad, have traditionally used paint that they make from the natural environment outside, called ochre.
- 00:04:24 Have you heard of this word ochre before? Ochre is a type of paint made from rocks. People rub the rocks side to side on a flat stone to make a really fine powder, like flour.
- 00:04:42 Then they mix it with water and glue to make it feel and look like paint. But, there aren't many blue rocks are there? So, the artist must have used a different material for the blue colour.
- 00:04:59 In 2005, Dhambit was badly hurt in a car accident. She got better, but because of her injuries, or her hurts, she found it difficult to grind the ochre. It was too hard for her body.
- 00:05:15 She also struggled to use the hand she used to paint with. That would be really hard, wouldn't it? Not being able to do something that you love anymore.
- 00:05:28 Dhambit didn't let that stop her though. She found a way to keep painting. Are you wondering what she did? I know I am.
- 00:05:40 Well, instead of having to make ochre from rocks, Dhambit was allowed to start using acrylic paint in tubes, bought from a shop.
- 00:05:54 This meant, not only was she able to paint again, she also had new colours to choose from.
- 00:06:03 Why do you think Dhambit loves the colour blue so much? Does it remind you of anything? What's something blue you can think of?
- 00:06:22 It reminds me of the ocean and the bright blue sky on a sunny day.
- 00:06:28 By looking at this work by Dhambit, we can learn more about her and what she likes.
- 00:06:36 Let's use our eyes again. Looking carefully at the painting, what shapes can you see?
- 00:06:46 I can actually make the shape that I can see with my hands. Like this.
- 00:06:53 Do you know what this shape is called? That's right. It's a diamond.
- 00:07:02 There are lots of diamond shapes on this painting, aren't there? These diamonds tell a story of fire. Can you see how the diamonds are joined together in long lines, starting at the bottom and going all the way to the top of the painting?
- 00:07:24 It's like flames in a fire that are going all the way up to the sky.
- 00:07:34 *Dhambit: 'Djirikiti-Wop!' This diamond is fire.*
- 00:07:39 *Myles: Are these the fire stick birds?*
- 00:07:42 Diamond designs are very important to Dhambit and her people. They are a symbol that represents the people she belongs to. Her clan.
- 00:07:54 This is kind of like how your school uniform is a symbol that shows the school that you belong to.
- 00:08:02 Can you think of another group that you belong to?

- 00:08:06 Maybe your family, or class at school, or even a sporting group like a soccer team or tennis club?
- 00:08:20 But look, there's even more in this painting.
- 00:08:25 What do you think these black things here are? Hmm. It looks like there is one, two of them. They both have a round shaped body and head and also two legs.
- 00:08:44 I can see a long beak coming from each of their heads. Can you guess what they are? I'll give you a clue. They are a type of animal with feathers.
- 00:09:02 That's right. They're a bird.
- 00:09:05 The artist has painted two djirikitj or quails, which are a type of bird.
- 00:09:14 This is what a quail looks like. You only see them sometimes because they are often hiding in the ground, among the dry grass.
- 00:09:27 Sometimes djirikitj are called fire making birds because they pick up burning sticks or twigs from the fire and carry them.
- 00:09:38 In this painting, it looks like Dhambit has painted the quails digging around at the bottom of the fire.
- 00:09:48 Now we know why the painting is called 'Djirikitj-Wop!'. 'Djirikitj', meaning the name of the birds, the quails. And 'Wop!', meaning the sound that the fire makes as it goes up in flames.
- 00:10:09 Artworks can tell us important things about a person's life, their language, what they like, what they don't like, and how they live their life.
- 00:10:22 What did you learn about this artist, Dhambit Mununggurr, when you slow down, used your eyes and looked at all the parts of the painting?
- 00:10:35 I learnt that Dhambit Mununggurr is an Indigenous woman and an artist who paints on bark using bright blue paints.
- 00:10:48 I learnt that diamonds are important to Dhambit and her clan and that the diamonds in this painting show fire.
- 00:11:00 I also learnt that djirikitj or quails are a type of bird that are sometimes called fire making birds.
- 00:11:12 Thank you for joining me today and I hope you liked learning all about this special artwork. I know I did.
- See you next time.