

# biennaleofsydney

**Doreen Chapman**

*Untitled, 2023*

Acrylic on canvas

Co-commissioned by the Biennale of Sydney and the Fondation  
Cartier pour l'art contemporain

Courtesy of the artist and Spinifex Hill Studio

Co-commissioned by the Biennale of Sydney and the Fondation Cartier pour l'art  
contemporain

Courtesy of the artist and Spinifex Hill Studio

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## Education Resource (K-6)



**Doreen Chapman**

**Cat#: 23-745**

*Untitled*

101.5 x 101.5 cm

Acrylic on Canvas



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## Overview

On the edge of the Sandy Desert, in the Pilbara region, is the community of Jigalong. In 1907 Jigalong housed workmen building the rabbit-proof fence; in the 1930s cameleers bred their animals on its red soil; in 1947 it was transformed into a Christian Mission, and in 1971, three years before the land would be returned to its rightful owners, Jigalong welcomed the birth of Doreen Chapman.

Born deaf and non-verbal, the Manyjilyjarra artist has painted alongside her mother, Martu Elder and senior artist May Wokka Chapman (herself practicing at Spinifex Hill Studios and Martumilli Artists), since she was a girl. In bright colours Chapman creates her work at pace, often using her own fingers and thumbs to create paintings of native flora and fauna as well as images of life for contemporary Indigenous people, here an ATM. Continuing to travel between communities across the Pilbara, Chapman's craft is crucial to her ability to communicate and share the stories which have shaped herself and her community.



**Doreen Chapman**

Cat#: 23-741

*Untitled*

182 x 45.5 cm

Acrylic on Canvas



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## Discussion Questions

Look at Chapman's work.

How would you describe the **colours** and **shapes**?

What do you think the paintings might **resemble**? Do you **recognise them** as automatic teller machines?

The colours and lines Chapman uses are different to how such machines might ordinarily look.

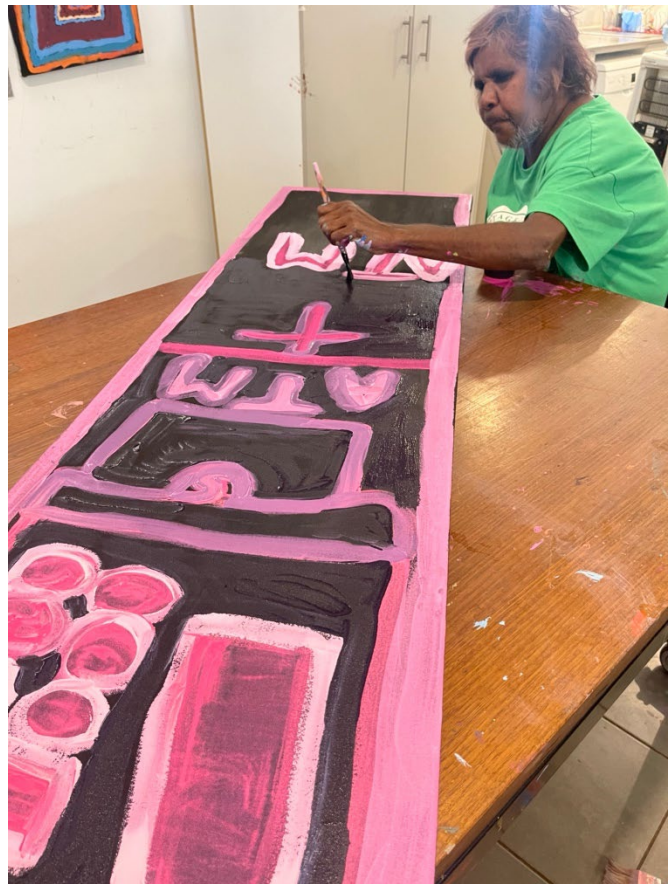
Why might an artist choose to paint an object **differently** to how it appears in **real life**?

Chapman has been profoundly **deaf since birth** meaning she neither hears nor talks. What might painting mean for Chapman? How might it **empower** her? How might it **connect** her to her **community** and **culture**?

## Practical Activities

Think about a regular object you see most days of your life. Using acrylic paints imagine the object in a new way. Try to keep the essence of the object while experimenting with different colours and lines.

In pairs think about something that's important to each of you; it could be a favourite food, a favourite movie, a loved one. Without telling your partner, take a pencil and paper and draw it as best you can. Using coloured pencils and shading try to communicate your feelings about your chosen topic without using any words. When you're finished, trade your drawing with your partner and discuss what you see.



*Doreen Chapman painting at Spinifex Hill Studio*

