

## Albert Tucker and Non-Western Art

11 February to 11 August 2013  
Albert & Barbara Tucker Gallery  
Curator: Lesley Harding

**HEIDE**  
MUSEUM  
OF MODERN  
ART



Albert Tucker  
*Enduring Figures* 1956  
oil on composition board  
94.3 x 129 cm  
Heide Museum of Modern Art  
On long-term loan from the Albert  
& Barbara Tucker Foundation

Albert Tucker held a career-long fascination with non-Western art. First collecting masks and sculptures in Melbourne in the 1940s, he later travelled to the Sepik River region of Papua New Guinea and acquired carvings and pottery that he displayed at home and in his studio.

Spanning a period of over thirty years, the works in this exhibition reveal the various ways in which Tucker was inspired by tribal art and trace the development of his painting style, from a cubist-inspired visual language to one that is resolutely his own. The carvings, masks, sculptures and pottery are all drawn from Albert and Barbara Tucker's personal collection. They are shown here in much the same way as the Tuckers chose to live with these works themselves—interspersed and in conversation with the artist's paintings, informing and complementing each other.

Like many modernists, Tucker's interests in non-Western art came via Picasso and the French cubists. In the first decades of the twentieth century, the School of Paris artists looked to African and Oceanic art as a model for alternative ways of representing the world—a vitalising force

that would inspire their quest to define modern life. In particular, it helped shift artists' reliance on naturalism, opening up the possibilities of abstraction. This was a reality more conceptual than visual: 'I paint things as I think them, not as I see them', Picasso said.

As well as including mask-like faces in their early paintings, the cubists developed composite, cumulative shapes that responded directly to the capacity of 'primitive' art to combine many forms into one. Space was treated without regard for perspective, concave could stand for convex, a solid could represent a void, and objects might be represented from a variety of viewpoints at once. In short, the conventions of Western painting were thrown up in the air.

For Tucker, the appeal further lay in the capacity for such art to convey archetypal human experience and to link back to tradition and ceremony, for which signs and symbols are more important than illusion. He saw the imagery as part of a continuum, a way of connecting cultures and of relating past and present.

# List of works

This catalogue is arranged alphabetically by artist then chronologically. Measurements are height before width before depth.

## Albert Tucker

born 1914, Melbourne, Victoria. Lived and worked Melbourne. Died 1999



*City* 1944  
oil on plywood  
61 x 76 cm  
Heide Museum of Modern Art  
Gift of Barbara Tucker 2005



*Tivoli Clown* 1945  
oil on composition board  
61 x 45.5 cm  
Heide Museum of Modern Art  
Gift of Barbara Tucker 2005



*Image of Modern Evil 31* 1947  
oil on composition board  
50.5 x 37.5 cm  
Heide Museum of Modern Art  
Gift of Barbara Tucker 2005



*Lover and Dog* 1949  
oil on canvas on composition board  
73.2 x 61 cm  
Heide Museum of Modern Art  
On long-term loan from the Albert & Barbara Tucker Foundation



*Duel* 1954  
oil on composition board  
81 x 62 cm  
Heide Museum of Modern Art  
On long-term loan from the Albert & Barbara Tucker Foundation



*Ikon* 1954  
oil and PVA on composition board  
35 x 25 cm  
Heide Museum of Modern Art  
On long-term loan from the Albert & Barbara Tucker Foundation

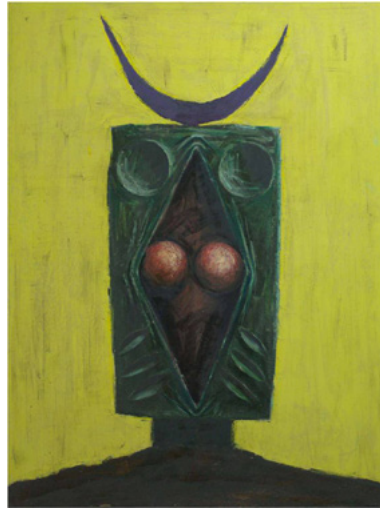




*Wounded Figures* 1954  
oil on composition board  
81 x 62.4 cm  
Heide Museum of Modern Art  
On long-term loan from the Albert &  
Barbara Tucker Foundation



*Encounter* 1955  
oil on composition board  
94.4 x 129 cm  
Heide Museum of Modern Art  
On long-term loan from the Albert &  
Barbara Tucker Foundation



*Totem* 1955  
oil on composition board  
129.5 x 96.5 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne



*Untitled (Study for Encounter)* c.1955  
fibre-tipped pen and pencil on paper  
22.1 x 28 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne



*Untitled (Study for Encounter)* c.1955  
fibre-tipped pen and pencil on paper  
22 x 28.1 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne



*Enduring Figures* 1956  
oil on composition board  
94.3 x 129 cm  
Heide Museum of Modern Art  
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*Head* 1956  
oil on composition board  
66 x 48 cm  
Albert & Barbara Tucker Foundation



*Untitled (Bull)* c.1956  
oil on paper  
21.7 x 32.2 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne



*Untitled (Figure and Boulder)* c.1956  
oil on paper  
22.2 x 32.2 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne

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*Untitled (Figure with Crescent Mouth)*  
c.1956  
oil on paper  
22.1 x 16 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne

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*Untitled (Figure with Horns)* c.1956  
oil on paper  
31.7 x 21.5 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne

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*Untitled (Faun with Shield and Rifle)*  
c.1956  
oil on paper  
32.2 x 22.1 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne

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*Untitled (Three Figures)* c.1956  
oil on paper  
16 x 22 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne

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*Explorer* 1957  
synthetic polymer paint and collage on  
composition board  
48 x 68.5 cm  
Heide Museum of Modern Art  
On long-term loan from the Albert &  
Barbara Tucker Foundation

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*King Kelly and His Legions* 1957  
oil, PVA, foil collage and cardboard on  
composition board  
96.2 x 130 cm  
Heide Museum of Modern Art  
Gift of Barbara Tucker 2009

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*Tattooed Head* 1957  
oil on composition board  
62.1 x 80.9 cm  
Heide Museum of Modern Art  
On long-term loan from the Albert &  
Barbara Tucker Foundation

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*Armoured Bushranger* 1958  
synthetic polymer paint and PVA on  
composition board  
122 x 91.5 cm  
Heide Museum of Modern Art  
Bequest of John and Sunday Reed 1982



*Cratered Head* 1958-60  
synthetic polymer paint on composition  
board  
122 x 101 cm  
Heide Museum of Modern Art  
Gift of the Albert & Barbara Tucker  
Foundation 2019



*John Batman* 1959  
synthetic polymer paint and collage on  
composition board  
122 x 91 cm  
Heide Museum of Modern Art  
On long-term loan from the Albert &  
Barbara Tucker Foundation



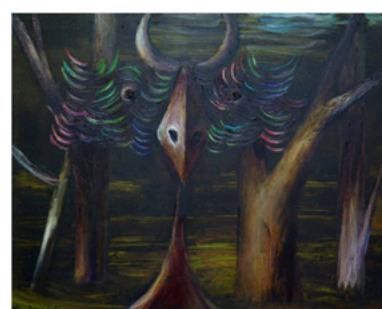
*Man* 1959  
synthetic polymer paint on composition  
board  
130.5 x 66.5 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne



*Masked Intruder* 1965  
oil on composition board  
122 x 151 cm  
Heide Museum of Modern Art  
Gift of the Albert & Barbara Tucker  
Foundation 2018



*Armoured Faun I* 1968  
oil on composition board  
76 x 60 cm  
Heide Museum of Modern Art  
On long-term loan from the Albert &  
Barbara Tucker Foundation



*Horned Entity* 1968  
oil on composition board  
60 x 75.5 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne



*Armoured Faun* c.1974  
synthetic polymer paint on composition board  
59 x 75 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne

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**Unknown artists**

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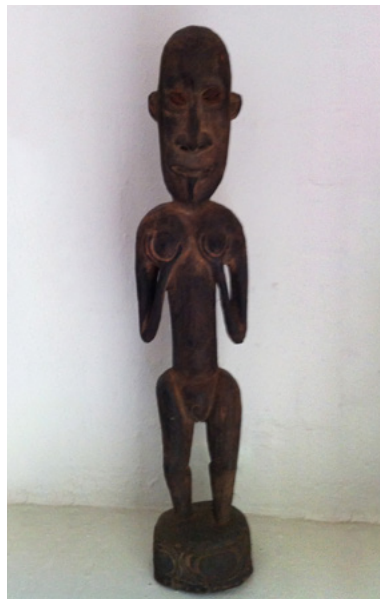
Board  
Sepik River, Papua New Guinea  
collected 1969  
wood and natural pigments  
Private collection, Melbourne

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Board  
Sepik River, Papua New Guinea  
collected 1969  
wood and natural pigments  
Private collection, Melbourne

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Carved Figure  
Sepik River, Papua New Guinea  
collected 1969  
wood and cowrie shells  
Private collection, Melbourne

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Faceboard or Double Mask  
Sepik River, Papua New Guinea  
collected 1969  
wood, natural pigments and natural fibre tassels  
Private collection, Melbourne

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Mask  
Sepik River, Papua New Guinea  
collected 1969  
wood and natural pigments, with natural fibre hanging apparatus  
Private collection, Melbourne

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Roof Finial or Gable Decoration  
Chambri Lakes, Sepik River,  
Papua New Guinea  
collected 1969  
earthenware and pigments  
Private collection, Melbourne

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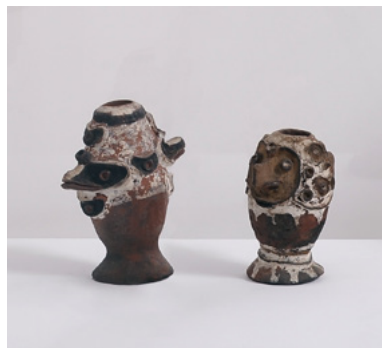
Roof Finial or Gable Decoration  
Chambri Lakes, Sepik River,  
Papua New Guinea  
collected 1969  
earthenware and pigments  
Private collection, Melbourne

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Spirit Figure  
Sepik River, Papua New Guinea  
collected 1969  
wood and pigments  
Private collection, Melbourne

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Storage Pots  
Chambri Lakes, Sepik River,  
Papua New Guinea  
collected 1969  
earthenware and pigments  
Private collection, Melbourne

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Vessel  
Chambri Lakes, East Sepik Province,  
Papua New Guinea  
collected 1969  
earthenware  
Private collection, Melbourne

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Yaul Ornaments  
Yuat River, East Sepik Province,  
Papua New Guinea  
collected 1969  
earthenware  
Private collection, Melbourne

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Squatting Figure c.1900–40  
Trobriand Islands, Milne Bay Province,  
Papua New Guinea  
wood and white pigment  
52 x 13.5 cm  
Heide Museum of Modern Art  
On long-term loan from the  
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Mask c.1945–60  
Sepik River, Papua New Guinea  
collected 1969  
wood, natural pigments and  
cowrie shells  
56.5 x 30.3 cm  
Heide Museum of Modern Art  
On long-term loan from the  
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Mask pre-1969  
Sepik River, Papua New Guinea  
collected 1969  
wood, natural pigments and shells  
Heide Museum of Modern Art  
On long-term loan from the  
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Mask c.1945–60  
Sepik River, Papua New Guinea  
collected 1969  
wood and natural pigments,  
with cane hanging apparatus  
39 x 32.3 cm  
Heide Museum of Modern Art  
On long-term loan from the  
Albert & Barbara Tucker Foundation

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Board pre-1969  
Sepik River, Papua New Guinea  
collected 1969  
wood and natural pigments  
Heide Museum of Modern Art  
On long-term loan from the  
Albert & Barbara Tucker Foundation

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Spirit Figure c.1970–80  
Sepik River, Papua New Guinea  
collected 1969  
wood and natural pigments  
131 x 33.5 cm  
Heide Museum of Modern Art  
On long-term loan from the  
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