



**KIMBERLEY
FOUNDATION
AUSTRALIA**

Researching, preserving and promoting Kimberley rock art.

Kimberley Visions: Rock Art Style Provinces of North Australia

2018



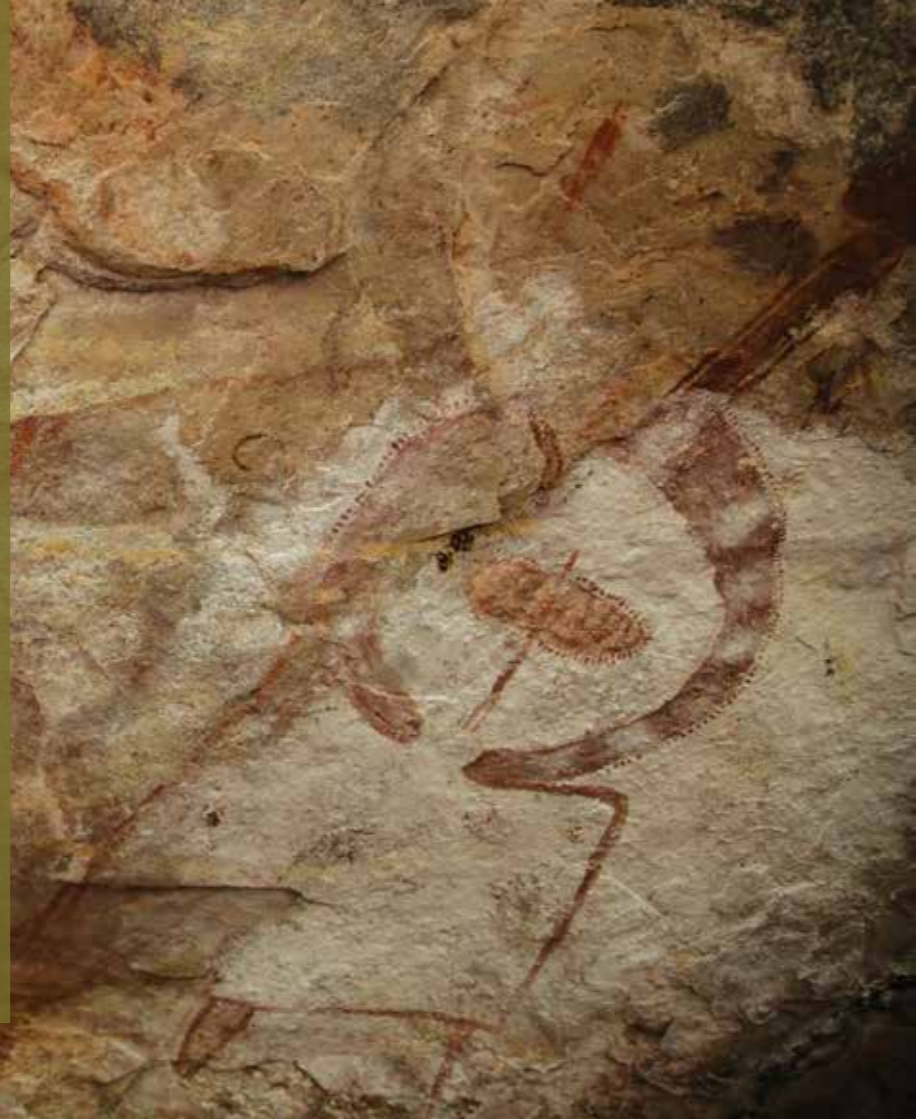
POLYCHROMATIC FIGURES, DRYSDALE NATIONAL PARK PHOTO: PAULINE HEANEY

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KIMBERLEY VISIONS

Kimberley Visions is a 5-year Australian Research Council Linkage Project with the Kimberley Foundation Australia as the Partner Organisation. KFA committed \$500,000 to this project. The project total of \$1.3 million in direct funding has been leveraged to \$2.4 million with in-kind support. The project is led by Prof Peter Veth, Kimberley Foundation Ian Potter Chair in Rock Art at the University of Western Australia.

Other project partners include The Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, Dunkeld Pastoral Company and the Universities of Melbourne, Monash and UWA. Balangarra Aboriginal Corporation and the Kimberley Land Council are the key Indigenous Partners. International collaboration is enabled through the French Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS) and the University of Savoie, France.



Kimberley Visions is a major scientific push to connect different art periods and map Australia's earliest human footfall across the northern landscape. It focuses on the emergence of rock art styles in northern Australia and how the art bodies we describe as Kimberley and Arnhem Land came to exist through time. There are known similarities and differences particularly in the earliest visible Kimberley rock art paintings forms (often depicting humans, animals and plants) and these have increased through time.

The 5-year project completed its second year in the field in 2017. Field work in 2018 will be conducted in June and July this year. The team will set up camp near a rich archaeological deposit on the Drysdale River and research will involve a combination of rock art survey work and excavation.

The project to date has recorded 583 sites and amassed a database of 44,000 photos in addition to 583 GIS and FileMaker records.

PhD scholars Ana Motta and Marine Benoit began their projects on early depictions of people, animals and identity; and Holocene stone artefact production, respectively and will again join the team in 2018.





FIELDWORK

Building on the field work conducted in 2016, expert archaeological teams, along with Balanggarra Traditional Owners and Rangers, completed a second three-month survey in July-September 2017.

The second field season of collaborative survey, recording, plant residue work, dating and excavation took place within the Drysdale and King George River catchments (as well as a fire-walk and coastal survey east of Kalumburu).

Led by UWA, members came from Monash, La Trobe, University of Melbourne and University of Savoie, with partner organisation support from the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, Dunkeld Pastoral Company and the Kimberley Foundation Australia. Over 600 rock art site complexes were recorded, with six excavations adding to six previous locales; and 3D laser imaging of Wanjina Rock shelter was completed.

The researchers worked across elevated rock plateaus and caves at Drysdale, Forrest and King George Rivers in the Kimberley. The expedition found 250 new sites in areas covering four times the size of Tasmania. Many of these sites will be revisited in 2018.

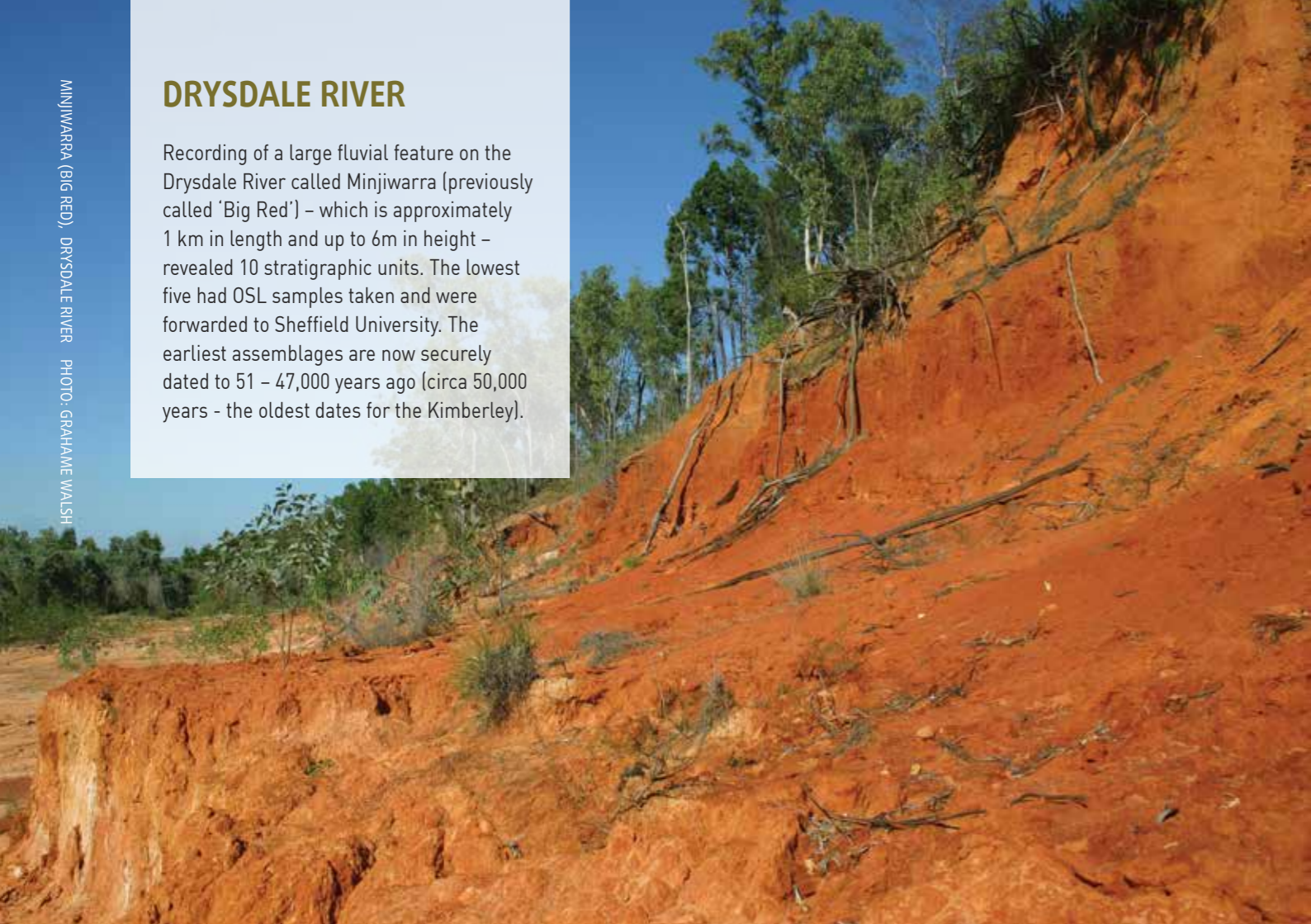


KING GEORGE RIVER

At Oomarri on the King George River Traditional Owner Ambrose Chalarimeri and the Balanggarra Indigenous Protected Area Rangers oversaw and participated in an excavation program at a major site complex on a lake and adjacent to a rich rock art locale. Covering several hectares this occupation site was excavated to below 2.20 metres revealing intact hearth stone arrangements, flaking floors and implement production areas. Optical stimulated Luminescence (OSL) and 14C samples were taken. Another excavation was carried out in a smaller shelter with art as well as dating of crusts and mud wasp nests. Over 150 new sites and complexes were recorded at Oomarri and surrounds.

DRYSDALE RIVER

Recording of a large fluvial feature on the Drysdale River called Minjiwarra (previously called 'Big Red') – which is approximately 1 km in length and up to 6m in height – revealed 10 stratigraphic units. The lowest five had OSL samples taken and were forwarded to Sheffield University. The earliest assemblages are now securely dated to 51 – 47,000 years ago (circa 50,000 years - the oldest dates for the Kimberley).



DRYSDALE NATIONAL PARK

Prof Peter Veth (UWA) and Assoc Prof Bruno David (Monash) led three excavations at Wanjina Rock shelter and at another site with more than 1,000 cupules.

A rich record of flaked and ground stone artefacts, grinding slabs, ochre and hearths have been recovered with samples being submitted for dating.

Prof John-Jacques Delannoy from the University of Savoie in France carried out geomorphic interpretations of the formation history of the shelter and helped direct excavation towards recovery of wall fragments.



TO URIAH WAINA PHOTO: MARK JONES



ASSOC PROF BRUNO DAVID, DRYSDALE NATIONAL PARK PHOTO: MARK JONES



PROF PETER VETH AND TO IAN WAINA, ARCHAEOLOGICAL DIG KIMBERLEY VISIONS PROJECT PHOTO: MARK JONES



ASSOC PROF BRUNO DAVID, ASSOC PROF SVEN OUZMAN, MARK JONES, ROBIN MAYER PHOTO: PAULINE HEANEY

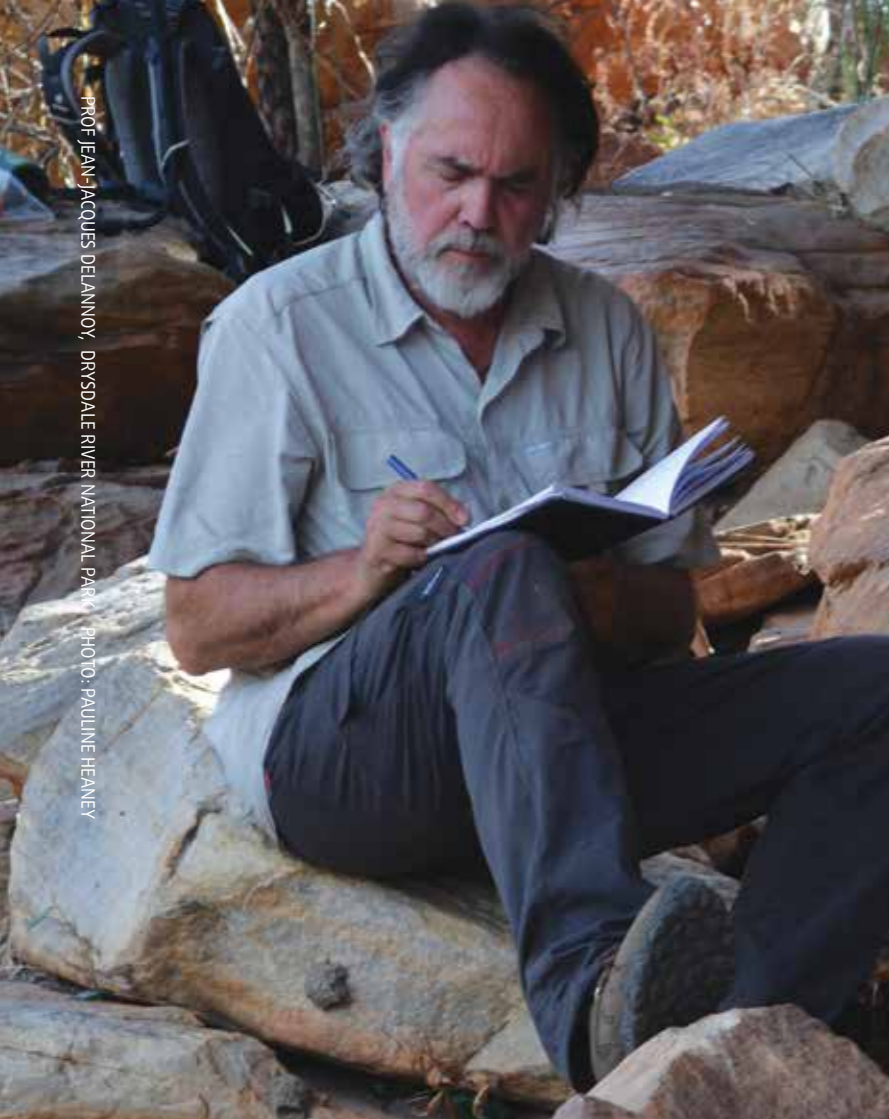
Research Team

Chief Investigator, Prof Peter Veth, is the Kimberley Foundation Ian Potter Chair in Rock Art at UWA. Peter is one of Australia's leading archaeologists. The other Chief Investigator is Bruno David, Assoc Prof in archaeology at the Monash Indigenous Studies Centre, Monash University and author of the recent Thames & Hudson publication *Cave Art*. Additional CIs are: Prof Andy Gleadow, Assoc Prof Sven Ouzman, Assoc Prof Martin Porr and Dr Leslie Zubieta. Partner Investigators from France are Prof Jean-Jacques Delannoy, Prof Jean-Michel Geneste and Dr Emilie Chalmin. Research Associates are Pauline Heaney (KFA rock art archivist) and Dunkeld Pastoral's Cecilia Myers.



PROF ANDREW GLEADOW AND ASSOC PROF BRUNO DAVID





Kimberley Visions includes world leading French geomorphologist Prof Jean-Jacques Delannoy and renowned archaeologist Prof Jean-Michel Geneste. Both Frenchmen have previously worked with Assoc Prof Bruno David on the rock art cave at Nawarla Gabarnmang (Northern Territory).

Delannoy is at the University of Savoie (France) and Director of the research laboratory EDYTEM (Environment, Dynamic and Mountain Areas). He led the scientific committee which advised the French government on the famous Chauvet-Pont d'Arc cave facsimile.

Geneste was the General Curator of Heritage and Director of the Centre National de la Préhistoire, the only laboratory in France devoted exclusively to the scientific study of rock art sites. Conservation then research director of the cave of Lascaux, he has been attached to the archaeological study of ornate caves for more than two decades. He directs the multidisciplinary study program of the Chauvet-Pont d'Arc cave, which brings together some fifty researchers from different countries.

PUBLIC DISSEMINATION OF LEARNINGS

- Prof Peter Veth delivered a KFA public lecture *Kimberley Visions: rock art dynamics of northern Australia* at the South Australian Museum in 2017
- Conference talks given in Australia, Austria and Norway
- 2 peer reviewed articles
- Sydney University Press book contract
- CSIRO Scientists in Schools program working with Kalumburu School and Junior Ranger Program
- Media interviews on ABC radio and coverage on ABC television and in print; KFA e-news to subscribers, KFA annual newsletter and website
- A joint UWA-Balanggarra paper was presented at the Australian Archaeological Association annual conference in December and awarded the Waikato Prize for Best Paper





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WATER LILIES, DRYSDALE RIVER NATIONAL PARK PHOTO: TOBY WARE, 2007