

# G. W. BOT



Dates: 1954  
Language: English  
Community: Canberra  
Art: Occidental  
Region: Canberra  
State: Canberra



Born in 1954 in Pakistan to Australian parents, G.W. BOT lived in many countries until the age of twenty, following her father who was in the military. She studied art in London, Paris and Australia. She graduated in 1982 from the Australian National University in Canberra. In the manner of the Australian Aborigines, she assigned herself a totem, that of the Wombat, an endemic mammal. We find the first references in French literature under the name of « *Grand Wam Bot* » from which she took her artist's name: G.W. BOT.

The technique of linocut is the artist's medium of choice. She discovered this engraving technique in London in the 1980s. She then elaborated a personal calligraphy where her vision of the territory and her sensitivity merge. G.W. BOT creates several series of linocuts inspired by her emotions. The artist questions his intimate relationship with nature by celebrating the forms of vegetation under the prism of a pictorial language.

G.W.Bot lived through the terrible fires that destroyed a large part of Canberra in 2003. Parts of the Canberra suburbs were virtually wiped out, with the loss of four people and over five hundred homes. Although scarred and traumatized after watching fires destroy the land around her property, Bot produced a body of poetic work that formed the core of her major exhibition « *An Island of Life* » in 2004. *Burnt Landscape (diptych)*, 2003 was chosen to illustrate Gavin Wilson's 2005 publication: « *It is the distillation of an experience - a quiet meditation on a horrific event that, for those who have suffered such tragic loss, would have been almost too appalling to comprehend*<sup>1</sup> »

The artist drew heavily on the poems of nineteenth-century Australian author Marcus Clarke. This poet described the peculiarity of the Australian Bush as « *the strange scribble of nature learning to write* ». G. W. BOT finds the strange marks of nature through the cracks in the bark of trees, the breaches in rocks etc. Bot's work reflects her love of poetry and metaphor and is filled with resonance and multiple meanings. To produce this effect, she explores lines and textures by working her surfaces in complex ways. She alternates fluid lines and flat black colors as if weaving rhythmic patterns. G. W. Bot creates a parallel realm to music where space speaks louder than words.

## Collections :

- The National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, Australia
- The Albertina Museum, Vienna, Austria
- The British Museum, London, United Kingdom
- Bibliothèque britannique, London, United Kingdom
- The Victoria and Albert Museum, London, United Kingdom
- Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, France
- The Fogg Museum of Fine Arts, Harvard University, USA

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1 WILSON Gavin, *Fireworks: tracing the incendiary in Australian art*, Artspace Mackay, Mackay City Council, 2005, p. 24