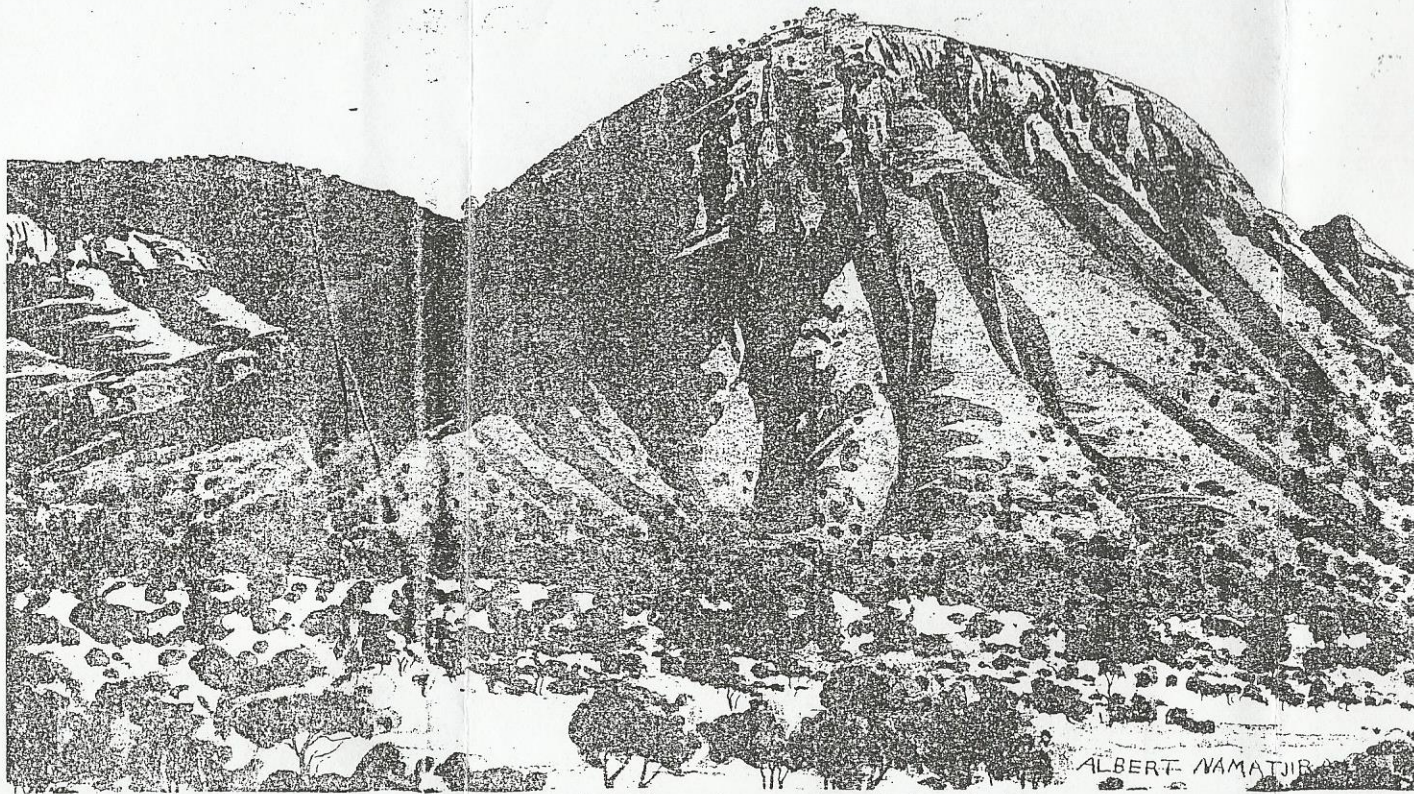


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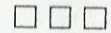
ON SHOW

DAVID BROMFIELD



The Macdonnell Ranges, by Albert Namatjira: part of the "complex, generous heritage" of his work on show at the Art Gallery.

the great artist by Trevor Nichols, a contemporary urban Aboriginal painting. Nichols is fascinated by the way Namatjira invoked his dreaming through the use of tones and flat colour.



AT ARTS House, Ruth Graham's "Abundance" is an excellent first one-person show of drawings, collages and sculptural assemblages.

Her neo-dada perspective is summed up in *Towards A Brighter Future*, a closed shrine-like box in which a hot naked bulb is suspended above a heap of melted consumer objects. The roof of the shrine is decorated with gaily coloured plastic hair curlers.

The joke is obvious, but this work has a serious side. The bright light of the never to be realised future does indeed burn out by the uniquely living present, leaving only squalid remnants. Dirty plastic toys and other consumer filth to testify to our existence.

Graham's superb collages also evidence the ease with which the squalid can degrade any worthwhile experience. The finest is *Fishy*, a split-level head and torso made of unequal halves from other photos.

This is mounted on a worn yellow panel at an angle in a carefully arranged collage blizzard of numbers in different sizes. The whole thing is surrounded by an exquisitely disharmonious blue frame with a couple of crudely carved fish on it.

Graham reveals more of her original vision in *Fishy* than in, say, *A Pig of a Time*, which is a reclining nude with a pig's head. Like several others this is marvellous work in the manner of the early dadaist Max Ernst.

Graham is also a first rate figure draftsman as the large-scale female nudes *Are You Wenzori* and *Altissimo* indicate.

Perhaps a little more simplicity in the lines would help but Graham already has a remarkable underlying grasp of the vital energies of the nude.



