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Mandawuy Yunupingu and Lowitja O'Donoghue

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WISDOM FROM AUSTRALIA'S INDIGENOUS LEADERS

Forewords by Mandawuy Yunupingu and Lowitja O'Donoghue

Photographed and recorded by Peter McConchie



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NOTE TO THE READER

The stories in this book were recorded circa 2001–2002. The text is a word-for-word transcription of the stories the Elders chose to tell. Headings have been added.

It is customary in Aboriginal communities not to mention the names or reproduce the images of the recently deceased. Care and discretion should be exercised when viewing this book.

Some of the interviews in this book contain information on traditional Indigenous remedies and ceremonies. Please note that the remedies and ceremonies within this book are not intended for self-use.

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Chapter 1 *Healing*—Dulumunmun Maxwell C. Harrison

Chapter 2 *The Land*—Kungka Tjilpi Tjuta: Emily Austin, Eileen Brown, Eileen Crombie,
 Martha Brown Edwards and Eileen Wingfield

Chapter 3 *Hunting*—Nungki Yunupingu

Chapter 4 *Gathering*—Laklak Marika [or Yunupingu] and Banygul [or Bunthami (1)] Yunupingu

Chapter 5 *Family*—Joy Wandin Murphy

Chapter 6 *Lore, Law*—Aboriginal Elders Council of Tasmania Aboriginal Corporation

Chapter 7 *Spirit*—Wilma Webb and Wayne Wonidgie Webb

Chapter 8 *The Sea*—Walter Nona and Ephraim Bani

Chapter 9 *Ceremony and Song*—George Musgrave and Tommy George

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FOREWORDS

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are of the Land and Sea. We fit into it, we are shaped by it.

Our teaching comes from the Earth itself, by knowing the Mangrove, how deep its story, or the Eucalypt tree, where does it go down to, what level. Knowing the earth is the centre of our wisdom.

Among us there have been no written laws; our traditions are passed down through the spoken word from one generation to the next. Unity, not division, sharing rather than hoarding is our way.

So now, we write to you in your language with our timeless wisdom. Learn from us, as we have had to learn from you.

MANDAWUY YUNUPINGU

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With a wonderful book like this, one wishes that it could be a thousand pages long and that Elders from every nation and every clan within Australia and the Torres Strait Islands could be listened to and their knowledge made available to all. To the Elders not included, an apology is made.

Within this book there are seventeen Elders who speak for their country. In doing so they speak about a universal knowledge that connects us and belongs to us all. These pages contain the true voice of the land and the sea.

LOWITJA O'DONOGHUE

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Max Dulumunmun Harrison