

TJUKURRPA

SmithDavidson Gallery

TJUKURRPA

SmithDavidson Collection paintings
by Australian First Nation Artists

Preview The Armory Show 2024

The Armory Show, Sept. 5 - 8

Booth #411

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Since 2007 SmithDavidson Gallery has been hosting regular exhibitions of important modern and contemporary art by Australian First Nations artists in Amsterdam, Miami, and at partner venues in Sydney, New York and Mexico City. SmithDavidson also exhibits and has exhibited at many important international art fairs, such as Art Cologne, Expo Chicago, TEFAF Maastricht, The Armory Show New York and PAN Amsterdam.

ETHICS

SmithDavidson Gallery acquires works for its collection of important Australian First Nations Art from a range of sources and always keeps a watchful eye on the origins and provenance of the paintings, to protect the buyer.

Selection criteria that can be taken into account include: photographic records, purchase receipts, certificates of authenticity, auction records and historical records, including exhibition history. We strongly believe in full transparency and strongly advise collectors to reach out to our experts, if ever the need arises for more detailed information about provenance or other details of an artwork either for acquisition or for sale.

SmithDavidson has implemented a resale royalty of 3% on all gallery sales of First Nation Artist works. These proceeds are dedicated to a national foundation to support first nations artist, families and communities as a whole.



Gallery Manager Paul Geerlings & Owner David Smith.

"Since discovering Australian Indigenous Art for myself, while travelling through Australia in 2006, my goal has been to open the eyes of art lovers and collectors around the world to this most unique and in my eyes the most amazing Art Movement of the 20th Century. Australian First Nations Art can stand alongside all other great art movements in the world."

David Smith



Alhalkere, My Country

Synthetic polymer paint on canvas
151 x 211 cm / 59.5 x 83.1 inch

Year: 1994

Price: POA

Bears inscription verso:
AGOD #4150 Aboriginal Gallery of Dreamings

This work is accompanied by a certificate of authenticity

Provenance

Aboriginal Gallery of Dreamings, Victoria, Australia. Cat No. AGOD/ 4150
Private collection, Victoria, Australia
Deutscher-Menzies, Sydney, NSW, Australia. September 2007, Lot No. 44
Menzies Estate Collection, Victoria, Australia

Exhibited

Emily Kngwarreye Paintings, Oude Kerk, Amsterdam, The Netherlands. 1999

About the work

Emily Kam Ngwarreye began painting at the age of seventy-nine and in just eight years completed no fewer than four thousand works of art. Yet, she never went to art school, never looked through art books, and rarely went to galleries. Her first experience of serious painting was the making of boldly fluid marks on the greased skin of her countrywomen. Her artistic achievement, miraculous in its strength and powerful appeal, owes much to the inspiration of Indigenous spirituality and the magical creation stories that underpin its belief systems.

This painting, *Alhalkere*, as all of her work, was painted horizontally (like the painter Jackson Pollock who intuitively accessed the spiritual realm) and evidence a horizontal consciousness not a hierarchical one. Knowledge is not privileged over wisdom. There is a balance between knowledge and wisdom – the knowledge gained through a life well lived and the wisdom of ancient stories that represent the intimacy of living on this world. The patterns and diversities of life compliment each other and are in balance.

'*Alhalkere*', Emily Ngwarreye answered when questioned by Rodney Gooch about her imagery is, 'Whole lot, that's whole lot, that's what I paint, whole lot'. Not only the place of her birth, *Alhalkere* was ultimately the nexus of everything that empowered Ngwarreye's life, reflecting her participation in ceremony and a lifetime of traditional cultural practice, this small triangular shaped land was the place and the law that she continually re-created in her art.



Emu Dreaming

Synthetic polymer paint on canvas
150 x 120.5 cm / 59.1 x 47.4 inch

Year: 1989

Price: POA

Bears inscription verso:

artist's name and Delmore Gallery cat. E013 and on label
verso: Kngwarreye, E / Alalgura – Emu Country / CS '98

This work is accompanied by a certificate of authenticity

Provenance

Commissioned by Delmore Gallery, via Alice Springs in 1989
Coventry Gallery, Sydney, Australia
Private collection, Sydney, Australia
Hogarth Galleries, Sydney, Australia
The Laverty Collection, Sydney, Australia. Acquired from the above in September 1995
Private Collection, The Netherlands

About the work

Recorded as E013 in the Delmore Gallery index of works, Untitled (Alalgura/Emu Dreaming) was the second of eight paintings by Emily Kngwarreye produced at Delmore Downs Station in December 1989. One month later, towards the end of January 1990, the painting was consigned for sale at Coventry Gallery in Sydney.

A significant early work, Emu Dreaming, 1989, conveys the artist's custodial responsibility for the Yam and the Emu, reflecting Kngwarreye's connection to country and Women's ceremonies through body painting and dance. Here the tracery of grey and milky white lines signifies the meandering roots of the yam below the earth with the tracks of the traveling emu above moving between nesting sites. The underlying linear pattern is submerged by in a profusion of overlapping dots painted in a limited palette of ochres (red, yellow and white), together with soft blues and pinks. Fundamentally, this work depicts the relationship between the emu and country. Beneath the soil the bush yam is ready for digging, while above, there is a flurry of movement as the male emu moves across the landscape feeding on various seeds, simultaneously shepherding his chicks into areas where the yam thrives.

This is the country that fattens the Emu, a most highly sought source of energy and protein in traditional times. This is where the Emu Dreaming came to and travelled from. This was an important historical ceremony triggered by the nature and timing of the season provoking Emily's memory and lasting emotions. Emily's fantastic broad range of red, yellow and purple represents the most important custodianship, the Anooralya (finger yam) and nterkwe (bush plum). These hardy and fertile plants provide both a tuber vegetable, and a seed-bearing flower called Kame (Emily's tribal name). Other colours reflect the time of season when bush flowers flourish.

Bears inscription verso:
AGOD #5604 Aboriginal Gallery of Dreamings

This work is accompanied by a certificate of authenticity

Provenance

Acquired directly from the artist and family in Utopia in 1995
The Aboriginal Gallery of Dreamings, Melbourne, Australia
Private collection, The Netherlands

About the work

Beginning late in 1991 and throughout the following years, Emily explored a range of techniques after largely abandoning the fine dotting and submerged linear tracking, which had characterised her earlier works. She used larger brushes to create broader circular dabs of paint, which often involved "double dipping" the brush in various colours, before attacking the canvas. In this work she shows tremendous confidence and great subtlety of colour in rendering the floral profusion throughout her desert homeland after summer rains.

Despite the sweeping gestural flourishes, the resultant image contains considerable nuances, which evoke the physical and spiritual fertility of the land and radiance of being, that is sought during ceremony.



My Country Wall

Acrylic on canvas
120 x 90 cm / 47.2 x 35.4 inch

Year: 1995

Price: \$ 115,000*



Yam Dreaming

Acrylic on canvas
120 x 90 cm / 47.2 x 35.4 inch

Year: 1996

Price: \$ 125,000*

Bears inscription verso:
AGOD #5517 Aboriginal Gallery of Dreamings

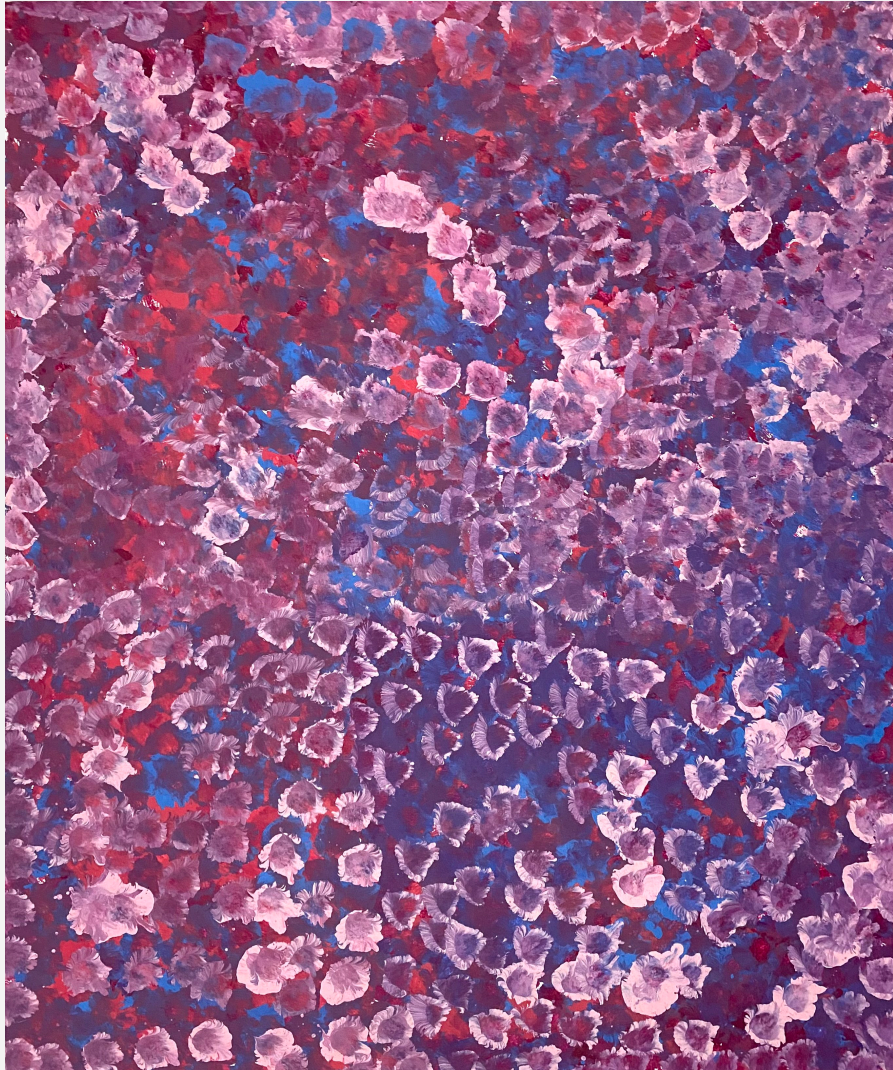
This work is accompanied by a certificate of authenticity

Provenance

Acquired directly from the artist and family in Utopia in 1996
The Aboriginal Gallery of Dreamings, Melbourne, Australia
Aboriginal Art Gallery Boomerang, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
Private collection, The Netherlands

About the work

Around 1995/96 Emily worked on the Yam series, with the focus on her major Dreaming story: a specific yam that grows beneath the surface. The subject of this work is Arlatyeye, the Pencil Yam or Bush Potato. This is a valuable food source and the subject of important songs, dances and ceremonies amongst Eastern Anmatyerre people. As the foliage dies off, cracks appear in the ground, which trace the root system, and indicate that the engorged tubers are ready to be dug up and eaten. Solid lines, stark and unadorned, trace the meandering paths of the pencil yam roots as they forge their way through the desert sands. Images such as this are always linked to Awelye - ceremonies that release spiritual power to maintain natures' fertility and hardiness. Body painting lines are fundamental to the participatory role of women in these ceremonies. This practise is symbolically linked to this work and helps evoke an atmosphere of ceremony. The belief that good seasons always return, that yam 'always comes back', is fundamental to understanding the desert environment and therefore survival. A parallel layer of expression runs with the fundamental understanding of Awelye , that being of basic human nature, understanding it, and abiding by the rules set down by society in order that it too, will survive. It was the subject of a great number of Emily Kngwarreye's paintings, which were created, most familiarly, in a vast array of vibrant colours. In this painting however, Emily has characterised the roots of the yam in the plant's full period of maturity and in a stark minimalist black and white contrast, emphasizing the artist's innovative abilities to depict traditionally significant objects or ceremonies.



My Country

Acrylic on canvas
100 x 83.3 cm / 39.4 x 32.7 inch

Year: 1994

Price: \$ 65,000*

Bears inscription verso:
AGOD #4346 Aboriginal Gallery of Dreamings

This work is accompanied by a certificate of authenticity

Provenance

Acquired directly from the artist and family in Utopia in 1995
The Aboriginal Gallery of Dreamings, Melbourne, Australia
Private collection, Baambrugge, The Netherlands
Private collection, The Netherlands

About the work

The people of Utopia are successfully maintaining a traditional lifestyle which today includes earning a living from painting. First Nations paintings are based on myths of the Dreamtime. In modern dot representations the sacred aspect of the story is often not revealed however the meaning remains transmitted through symbols which are easily understood.

This painting depicts body paint designs that the women apply to their upper torso for ceremony/coroboree. "Awelye" (dancing) in the old days used part colored ochres but Emily has adapted acrylic paint on to canvas to depict important ceremonial occasion.



Image Courtesy Tony Sawenko (1980)

Emily Kam Ngwarray

Emily Kam Ngwarray is without a doubt one of the most acclaimed female First Nations artists. She may be considered one of the greatest contemporary Australian artists and her influence on the world of both indigenous and non-indigenous Australian art is indisputably great.

Emily was born in Alhalkere in 1910, 230 km north-east of Alice Springs on the edge of the Simpson Desert, Northern Territory. Unusual for a woman, she became a camel driver and stockhand at Bushy Part Station and Mt Riddock Station. This hard work contributed to her physical strength later in life. Encouraged by the return of traditional lands to indigenous Australians under the Aboriginal Land Rights Act in 1976, Emily returned to Alhalkere and was one of the founders of the Utopia Women's Batik Group in 1978.

Following its first exhibition in Alice Springs in 1980, this movement had limited commercial success. This led, however, to an initiative in 1988 of the Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association (CAAMA), called "A Summer Project", which distributed 100 blank canvases and acrylic paint among the First Nations in Utopia. The resultant 81 works, including Emily's first painting, "Emu Woman", made art history. Her work attracted immediate attention. The experimental, yet determined work spoke of a rare talent. At the same time, she became one of the founders of indigenous women's art in the Eastern and Central Deserts of Australia.

Having started at nearly eighty years old, her painting career lasted a mere seven years. One of her most remarkable attributes was her capacity to develop new styles; even adopting a new style a fortnight before her death. Yet her vast output was a result of her enormous physical and mental energy, as well as her forceful personality and deep love for her ancestral country. Most of her work can be distinguished by an exceptionally wide palette of bright colors; of special significance are her more minimalist abstract works of two colors, inspired by traditional body painting.

Characteristic in Emily's paintings is a style referred to as her 'dump-dump' style. This originally involved coarse wide brushstrokes and build up layers of colored dots on a grid pattern surface to represent elements of landscapes and vegetation. This was followed by an even more diffuse pattern of layered dots with magnificent colors dominating.

"We didn't have any tents — we lived in shelters made of grass. When it was raining the grass was roughly thrown together for shelter. That was in the olden time, a long time ago."

During the last two years of her life, she broke with her bright color schemes by making minimalist "line" paintings in black, brown or blue on a white background with horizontal or vertical stripes inspired by women's ceremonial body painting. This led to her "Wild Yam Dreamings" ; layers of intricately crossing lines that represent the roots of the Yam plant, an edible and spiritually significant indigenous vegetable. From this period, comes her most important masterpiece, Big Yam Dreaming (1995), which was donated to the National Gallery of Victoria.

Outside of Australia her work increasingly receives the recognition it deserves. In 2008, the National Art Center in Tokyo opened the exhibition 'Utopia: the Genius of Emily Kam Ngwarray' the largest collection of works by a single Australian artist ever exhibited outside Australia, with an estimated value of no less than \$30,000,000.

Her masterpiece 'Earth's Creation' (4 panels, each 275 x 160 cm) has been exhibited at the Central Pavilion of the 56th Venice Biennale in 2015. In the same year her work was part of the Signs & Traces exhibition in Poznan, Poland.

In 2019 Emily was featured on Artsy.com's list of *The 20 Most Influential Artists of 2019*. Her work continues to inspire and captivate audiences worldwide, earning her a well-deserved place among the most impactful artists of that year.

Also, recently, the Tate Modern announced that it will stage a major solo exhibition dedicated Emily Kam Ngwarray. Opening in 2025 and organised in close collaboration with the National Gallery of Australia (NGA), this will be the first large-scale presentation of Ngwarray's work ever held in Europe, providing a rare opportunity for international audiences to learn more about this celebrated painter. The Tate exhibition follows the opening of the [NGA's Ngwarray exhibition](#), which ran from 2 December 2023 to 28 April 2024.

Selected Collections

National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, Australia
 Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, Australia
 Parliament House Art Collection, Canberra, Australia
 Campbelltown City Art Gallery, Sydney, Australia
 Benalla Art Gallery, Victoria, Australia
 Allen, Allen & Hemsley, Sydney, Australia
 BP Australia, Australia
 Transfield Collection, Sydney, Australia
 The Collection of Colin & Elizabeth Laverty, Sydney, Australia
 The Kasumi Co. Collection, Japan
 Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection of the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, USA
 Collection of Steve Martin & Anne Stringfield, New York, USA
 Kelton Foundation, California, USA
 KLM Royal Dutch Airlines, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
 Ebes Collection, Melbourne, Australia
 National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia
 Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia
 Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, Australia
 Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, Australia
 Artbank, Sydney, Australia
 Donald Kahn Collection, Lowe Art Museum, University of Miami, USA
 Fred Torres Collection, Australia
 The Luczo Family Collection, USA
 Auckland City Art Gallery, New Zealand
 The Robert Holmes à Court Collection, Perth, Australia
 Fondation Burkhardt-Felder Arts et Culture, La Grange, Motiers, Switzerland
 Thomas Vroom Collection, The Netherlands

Selected Literature

Neale M, *Emily Kame Kngwarreye: Alhalkere, Paintings from Utopia*, Macmillan Art Pub., Melbourne, 1998

Neale M (ed), *Utopia; The Genius of Emily Kame Kngwarreye*, National Museum of Australia, Canberra and The National Museum of Art, Osaka, 2007

Cole K., Green J., *Emily Kam Kngwarray*, National Gallery of Australia, University of Washington Press, Seattle, 2024

Selected Exhibitions

2025 Solo Exhibition, Tate Modern, London, United Kingdom

2023 Solo: *Emily Kam Kngwarray*, National Gallery of Australian, Canberra, Australia
Sharjah Biennial 15, Thinking historically in the Present, Painting: Multi Color Yam acquired via SmithDavidson Gallery

2022 *Origins*, SmithDavidson Gallery, New York, USA

2021/23 *A Year in Art: Australia 1992*, Tate Modern, London, United Kingdom

2021 *Voyage across Aboriginal Australia – Founders, Favourites*, Fondation Burkhardt-Felder Arts et Culture, Switzerland

2020 *Origins: Australian Aboriginal Art from the SmithDavidson Collection*, SmithDavidson Gallery, The Netherlands

2019 *Desert Painters of Australia, Works from the Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection of the University of Virginia and the Collection of Steve Martin and Anne Stringfield*, Gagosian Gallery, New York & Beverley Hills, USA

2015 *Signs and Traces: Contemporary Aboriginal Art*, Cultural Institute Zamek, Poznan, Poland

2010 *Remembering Forward: Australian Aboriginal Painting since 1960*, Museum Ludwig, Cologne, Germany

2008 Solo: *Utopia: The Genius of Emily Kame Kngwarreye*, National Museum of Australia, Canberra, Australia; Museum of Modern Art, Osaka; National Art Center, Tokyo, Japan

1997 La Biennale di Venezia, Australian Pavillion, Italy

1994 National Gallery of Victoria, Australia

1993/4 *Aratjara: Art of the First Australians*, Kunstmuseum Nordrhein Westfalen, Düsseldorf, Germany; Hayward Gallery, London, United Kingdom; Louisiana Museum, Humlebaek, Denmark

1992 *Crossroads, Towards a New Reality, Aboriginal Art from Australia*, National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto and Tokyo, Japan

1990 Contemporary Aboriginal Art, Carpenter Centre for the Visual Arts, Harvard University, USA

1989 Emily Kame Kngwarreye and Louie Pwerle are the first recipients of the CAAMA/ Utopia Artists-in-Residence Project funded by the Robert Holmes à Court Foundation, Australia

Signed verso: ROVER

This work is accompanied by a certificate of authenticity

Provenance

Flinders Lane Gallery, Victoria, Australia
Private Collection, Victoria, Australia
Lawson-Menzies, Sydney, NSW, Australia. May 2007, Lot No. 64
Menzies Estate Collection, Victoria, Australia

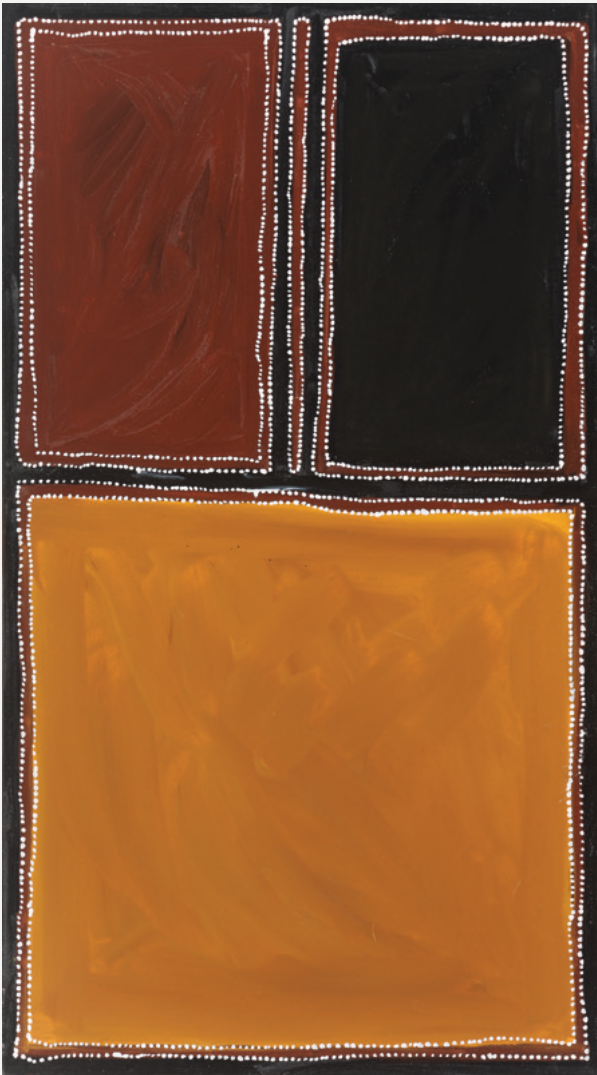
Exhibited

The Importance of Ochre, Flinders Lane Gallery, Victoria, Australia, 1998

About the work

The Wati Kutjarra Tjukurrpa (Two Goanna Men Dreaming) mythology relates to the offense of moral laws by a debauched old man and the revenge and retribution enacted by his two sons. The two brothers, who became Dreaming ancestors, travelled across the desert country and in doing so created natural landforms and sacred sites by leaving their presence at places they visited.

This painting shows the flat top hills which extend across from Balgo to Broome. This area is called the Wati Kadjara. As an aerial view the different areas represent the following: The yellow area is the Great Sandy Desert, the red area is one of the many flat top mountains, and the black area is the initiation place for young boys-Warbuton.



Wati Kutjarra Area

Natural earth pigments on Belgian linen
178 x 100 cm / 70.1 x 39.4 inch

Year: 1995

Price: POA



Rover Thomas Joolama

Rover Thomas (c. 1926 – 1998), one of Australia's most acclaimed First Nations artists, was responsible for a major movement in Australian art. He was born to a Wangkajunga father and a Kukatja mother around 1926 at Kunawarritji on the canning stock route in north-western Australia. This route crosses both the great Sandy and Gibson deserts, areas that would play an important role in Thomas's life. At around the age of ten Rover moved to Billiluna station where he started working soon after as a stockman. He subsequently worked as a stockman and assistant fencer at various stations in Western Australia and the Northern Territory, and finally settled permanently in the north-east Kimberley region, moving to Warmun (Turkey Creek) in 1975.

It was in this former government reserve that, in a sequence of dreams, the Gurirr Gurirr, a narrative dance cycle, was revealed to him. The catalyst for this revelation was a car accident on a flooded road to Warmun in 1974 in which an elderly woman – Rover's classificatory mother – was seriously injured, later dying as a result.

After her death, her spirit undertook the journey home, during which it encountered other spirits. As it travelled eastwards, the old woman's spirit was reminded of recent historical events, including a massacre, and witnessed developing events (Cyclone Tracy). The local population interpreted the ravaging of Darwin by Cyclone Tracy as an act of retribution by the Rainbow Serpent against the decline of cultural practices.

The Gurirr Gurirr follows the spirit's meandering back to country. In the decade that followed, this ceremony was performed at regular intervals at Turkey Creek and adjacent communities. The Gurirr Gurirr, while asserting the enduring memory and knowledge of particular sites, was vital to the development of painting at Warmun. Essential to these performances were painted boards, illustrating the narrative, which were carried across the shoulders. Rover Thomas, who did not paint until 1981/2 supervised Paddy Jaminji in the production of these boards. The Gurirr Gurirr boards inspired Thomas to experiment with painting and other themes.

Nowhere has the merging of past and present, the spiritual and the physical, been more clearly realised than in Thomas's visionary paintings. His landscapes are corporeal, vacillating between figuration and abstraction to suggest the topography of the East Kimberley and the presence of unseen forces within it. Thomas used the typical palette of the Kimberley in his paintings.

He mapped out the land and its stories in tones of deep red and brown ochre, which fill subtle organic forms. The distinctive characteristics in Thomas's paintings is two modes of representation that converge in one remarkable gestural style: while a planar view often depicts roads and flattened country surfaces, profile views describe Kimberley landscape features.

His compositions are uncompromising. Thomas used a deeply personal vision to redefine the pictorial conventions of the region. Stylistic sparseness in composition, however, belies the complexity of meaning in the picture. History, mythological knowledge and lived experience are simultaneously present in the narrative.

Rover Thomas pioneered the groundbreaking Warmun School, a form of depiction that was later echoed in the work of many east Kimberley artists: Queen McKenzie, Jack Britten, Hector Jandany, George Mung Mung, and the second wave of east Kimberley painters, Rusty Peters, Freddie Timms and Paddy Bedford. By the time of his death in 1998, the Warmun style of painting had become iconic.

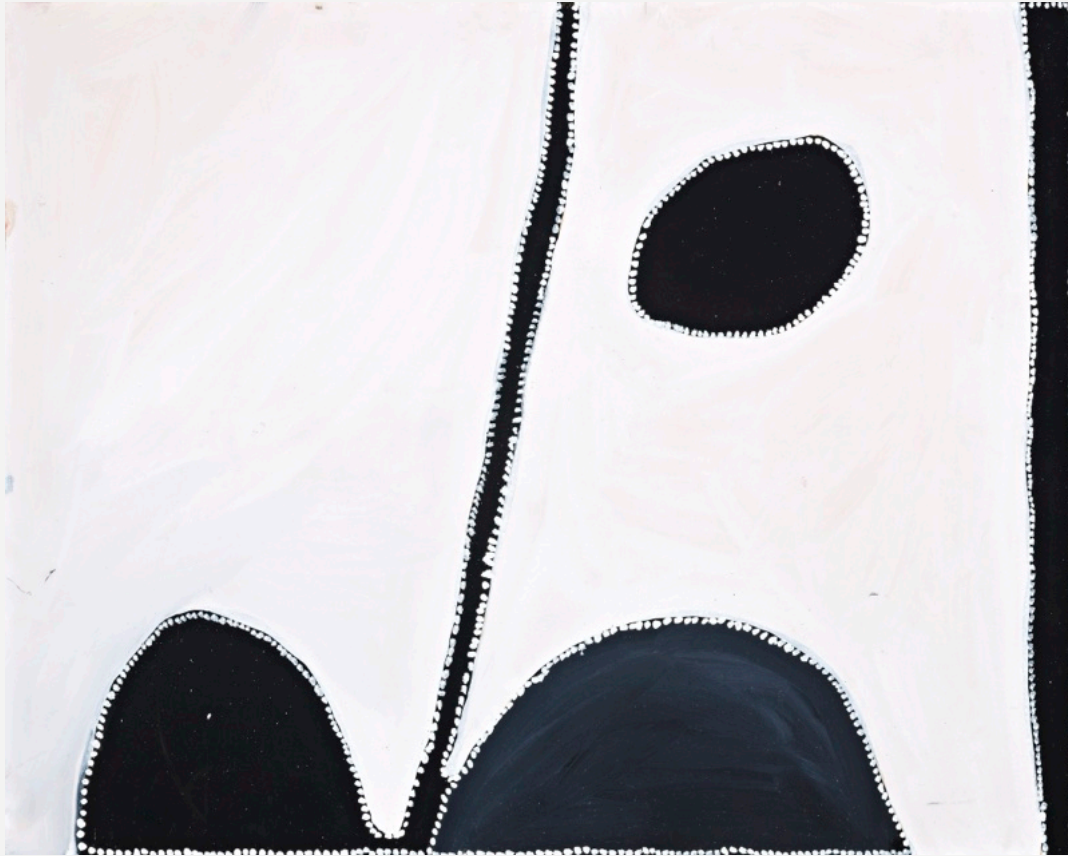
Roads Cross, held at the National Gallery of Australia in 1994, was the first major retrospective of the artist's work and in 1990 Rover Thomas and Trevor Nicholls were the first indigenous Australian artists to represent Australia at the Venice Biennale. His work has been seen in many national and international exhibitions. Thomas himself travelled widely and went to Venice and New York. He was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Western Australia in 1997 in recognition of his contribution to the arts.

Selected Collections

Dr Peter Elliot Collection, Sydney, Australia
 Hank Ebes Collection, Melbourne, Australia
 The Luczo Family Collection, USA
 Kaplan and Levi Collection, Seattle, USA
 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, Australia
 Shepparton Art Museum, Shepparton, Australia
 Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, Australia
 Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia
 Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, Australia
 Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, Australia
 Berndt Museum of Anthropology, Perth, Australia
 University of Western Australia, Perth, Australia
 Holmes à Court Collection, Perth, Australia
 The Kelton Foundation, Santa Monica, USA
 Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, Australia
 National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia
 Aborigène Galerie, Paris, France

Selected Exhibitions

2023	<i>Dreaming with your Eyes Open</i> , SmithDavidson Gallery, Amsterdam, The Netherlands	1994	<i>Power of the Land: Masterpieces of Aboriginal Art</i> , National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia <i>Yiribana</i> , Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia
2022	<i>Origins</i> , SmithDavidson Gallery, New York, USA	1993	<i>Images of Power: Aboriginal Art of the Kimberley</i> , National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia
2021	<i>Aboriginalities</i> , Koninklijke Musea voor Schone Kunsten, Brussels, Belgium <i>Voyage across Aboriginal Australia – Founders’ Favourites</i> , Fondation Burkhardt-Felder Arts et Culture, Moitiers, Switzerland	1992	<i>Crossroads-Towards a New Reality: Aboriginal Art from Australia</i> , National Museums of Modern Art, Kyoto and Tokyo, Japan
2019	<i>Tiempo de Sonar</i> , Museo Nacional de las Culturas del Mundo, Mexico-City, in cooperation with Coo-ee Gallery, Sydney, Australia	1991	<i>Aboriginal Art and Spirituality</i> , High Court of Australia, Australia <i>Flash Pictures</i> , National Gallery of Australia, Australia
2018	<i>Ancestral Modern: Australian Aboriginal Art from the Kaplan & Levi collection</i> , Blanton Museum at the University of Texas, Austin, USA	1990	<i>Contemporary Aboriginal Art 1990: From Australia</i> , Third Eye Centre, Glasgow and United Kingdom <i>Anatjari Tjampitjinpa, Dini Campbell Tjampitjinpa and Rover Thomas</i> , John Weber Gallery, New York, USA Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art, Art Gallery of South Australia, Australia <i>Balance 1990: views, visions, influences</i> , Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, Australia <i>L’ete Australian a Montpellier</i> , Musee Fabre, France <i>Abstraction</i> , Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia La Biennale Venezia: Australian Representative, with Trevor Nickolls, Venice, Italy
2016	<i>One Road: Aboriginal Art from Australia’s Deserts</i> , Travelling Exhibition in Japan, curated by t the National Museum of Australia, Canberra, Australia <i>Everywhen: The Eternal Present in Indigenous Art from Australia</i> , Harvard Art Museums, Cambridge, USA	1989	<i>A Myriad of Dreaming: Twentieth Century Aboriginal Art</i> , Westpac Gallery, Melbourne; Design Warehouse Sydney, Australia <i>L’ete Australien a’ Montpellier</i> , Musee Fabre Gallery, Montpellier, France <i>On the Edge: five contemporary Aboriginal artists</i> , Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, Australia <i>Turkey Creek: Recent Work</i> , Deutscher Gertrude Street, Melbourne, Australia
2013/14	<i>Vivid Memories - An Aboriginal Art History</i> , Musée d’Aquitaine, Bordeaux, France	1988	<i>Art from the Kimberley</i> , Aboriginal Artists Gallery, Sydney, Australia <i>Innovative Aboriginal Art of Western Australia</i> , University of Western Australia, Perth, Australia <i>Recent Aboriginal Painting</i> , Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, Australia <i>Creating Australia: 200 Years of Art 1788-1988</i> , International Cultural Corporation of Australia <i>Australian Art Post-1960</i> , Deutscher Gallery, Brunswick, Australia
2010/13	<i>Yiwarra Kuju: The Canning Stock Route</i> , Touring Exhibition, by the National Museum of Australia, Canberra, Australia	1987	<i>Crossroads, Towards a New Reality, Aboriginal Art from Australia</i> , National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto and Tokyo, Japan <i>Recent Aboriginal Art from Western Australia</i> , National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, Australia
2010	<i>Desert Country</i> , Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, Australia <i>Remembering Forward. Australian Aboriginal Painting since 1960</i> , Museum Ludwig, Cologne, Germany	1986	Contemporary Aboriginal Art, Carpenter Centre for the Visual Arts, Harvard University, USA The Third National Aboriginal Art Award Exhibition, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, Australia
2006	<i>Aboriginal Art</i> , Art Gallery of Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia		
2000	Nicholas Hall, Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, Russia <i>From Appropriation to Appreciation: Indigenous influences and images in Australian Visual Art</i> , Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide, Australia <i>Images of the Land</i> , Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia		
1998	<i>The Importance of Ochre</i> , Flinders Lane Gallery, Victoria, Australia		
1996	<i>Figures in the Land</i> , National gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia <i>Abstraction: Signs, Marks, Symbols</i> National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia <i>This is my country, this is me</i> , Seattle art museum, Seattle, USA <i>Contemporary Australian Abstraction</i> , Niagara Galleries, Melbourne, Australia <i>Nangara: The Australian Aboriginal Art Exhibition</i> , Ebes Collection Sichtung Sint-Jan, Brugges, Belgium		
1995	<i>Stories: Eine Reise zu den grossen Dingen</i> , Touring: Sprengel Museum Hannover, Museum fur Volkerkunde Leipzig, Haus der Kulteren der Welt Berlin, Ludwig-Forum fur Internationale Kunst, Aachen, Germany		
1994	Solo: <i>Roads Cross: The Paintings of Rover Thomas</i> , National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, Australia Solo: <i>Rover Thomas</i> , Utopia Art Sydney, Stanmore, Australia <i>Identities: Art from Australia</i> , Taipei Fine Arts Museum, Taipei, Taiwan		



Janterri - Dolly Hole

Natural pigment, ochres and synthetic binder on composition board
80 x 100 cm / 31.5 x 39.4 inch

Year: 2004

Price: \$ 100,000*

Signed with initials on reverse
also bears inscription verso: Jirrawun Arts cat. PB CB 3-2004-17

This work is accompanied by a certificate of authenticity

Provenance

Painted for Jirrawun Aboriginal Arts Corporation, Kununurra, Australia
The Estate of Paddy Bedford, Australia
Bonhams, Sydney, Australia. 21 Nov 2011, lot 18
Private collection, Melbourne, Australia
Private collection, The Netherlands

Exhibited

Signs and Traces. Contemporary Aboriginal Art, Zamek Culture Centre, Poznan, Poland, 2015
Paddy Bedford: Crossing Frontiers, Aboriginal Art Museum Utrecht (AAMU), Utrecht, The Netherlands, 2009-2010

Literature

Michael, L. (ed.), *Paddy Bedford*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, 2006, p. 161 (illus.)
Petitjean, G., et al., *Paddy Bedford: Crossing Frontiers*, Storer, R., *Paddy Bedford*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, 2006, p. 161 (illus.)
Signs and Traces. Contemporary Aboriginal Art, Poznań: Art, Ykwariat, 2015, p. 43 (illus.)

About the work

According to anthropologist Dr Frances Kofod: 'Janterri is a place where the artist's family have a small outstation. It is near a water-hole known by Europeans as Dolly Hole. It is an important place where dreamtime women conducted their special ceremonies.'

Dolly Hole refers to a deep waterhole located on Bedford Downs station, south of Warmun in the Kimberley region of Western Australia. Like much of the artist's work, this painting sees Bedford bring together his extensive geographical knowledge of the physical landscape - roads, rivers, hills, and stock camps - combined with important ancestral Dreamings that had been passed down to him; stories of the creation of man and animal, spirits, traditions, and the law of the land. For Bedford, painting was as much an expression of country as it was of cultural identity.

Bedford created a unique aesthetic, juxtaposing bold forms with vast, stark expanses of paint. Produced three years before his death, Dolly Hole sees the artist paring back to a more essential palette of black and white, eliminating his earlier use of ochre hues. Here the contrast of positive and negative spaces is emphasised, but so too is the distinction between striking areas of dense, dark colour and the softened, muted washes of blue and white, suggesting the tension between strength and sensitivity in the artist's own life.

The subject matter of Bedford's paintings is drawn from the artist's two main and very different sources of knowledge and experience. The dramatic Kimberley landscape around Bedford Downs and the historical events that took place there and intersect with the ever present Ngarranggarni or Dreaming, the parallel time dimension where the landscape, animals and plants were created and in which the laws determining behaviour and tradition were established. His paintings also present a dichotomy of viewing, powerful and bold forms, reminiscent of physical features of the Kimberley, are surrounded by expansive delicate washes of muted color, presenting a contrast between powerful physicality and great sensitivity.



Camel Gap

Natural pigment, ochres and synthetic binder on composition board
80 x 100 cm / 31.5 x 39.4 inch

Year: 2004

Price: \$ 100,000*

Signed with initials on reverse
also bears inscription verso: Jirrawun Arts cat. PB CB 3-2004-17

This work is accompanied by a certificate of authenticity

Provenance

Jirrawun Aboriginal Arts, Kununurra, Western Australia
The Estate of Paddy Bedford
Bonhams, Sydney, Australia. 21 November 2011, lot 3B
Private collection, Sydney, Australia
Private collection, The Netherlands

Exhibited

Paddy Bedford: Crossing Frontiers, Aboriginal Art Museum Utrecht (AAMU), Utrecht, The Netherlands, 2009-2010

Literature

Storer, R., *Paddy Bedford, Museum of Contemporary Art*, Sydney, 2006, p. 161 (illus.)
Petitjean, G., et al., *Paddy Bedford: Crossing Frontiers*, Museum of Contemporary Aboriginal Art (AAMU), Utrecht, The Netherlands, Snoeck Editions, Heule, Belgium, 2009, p. 95 (illus.)

Related work

Camel Gap, 2004, ochres and pigment on linen, 150.0 x 180.0 cm, in the collection of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program by Colin and Elizabeth Laverty, 2012



Paddy Nyunkuny Bedford

Paddy Nyunkuny Bedford was born at Bedford Downs Station, a large cattle property in the remote East Kimberley of Western Australia. He belonged to the Gija people. His family history was marked by several brutal events resulting from clashes between white colonists and his indigenous ancestors.

He worked as a stockman around Warnum in the East Kimberley until precluded by injury. As a senior law man of his tribe, who determined proper customs and traditions, Paddy had engaged in traditional painting for ceremonial purposes, especially body-painting, from early manhood.

It was only much later in life, in 1998, that he was encouraged to paint on canvas and later in gouache on paper. He soon joined the newly formed Jirrawun Arts group and became part of the East Kimberley/Turkey Creek movement led by Rover Thomas and Queenie McKenzie. Solo exhibitions in Melbourne, Sydney, Canberra and Darwin soon drew the praise of art critics and his work was recognized as groundbreaking.

In a short period of eight years Bedford built up a rich oeuvre and was to be regarded as one of the most important indigenous artists of Australia. His work has a unique distinctive style: very graphical, use of striking colors, and sparse but precisely placed lines, often delineated by white dots. His works depict the East Kimberley landscape where he lived and worked his whole life, in combination with the Dreamtime stories of the emu, turkey and black cockatoo associated with his family.

The subject matter of Bedford's paintings is drawn from two very different sources, the dramatic East Kimberley landscape and the historical events that occurred there. Central to both is the ever present Ngarranggarni or Aboriginal Dreaming, the parallel time dimension where the landscape, animals and plants were created and in which the laws determining behavior and tradition were established. His paintings also present a dichotomy of imagery. Powerful bold forms reminiscent of physical features of East Kimberley are surrounded by expansive delicate washes of muted color. A contrast is created between powerful physicality and great sensitivity. Behind their simple composition lie complex underlying stories, such as the Emu, Bush Turkey and Cockatoo Dreamings of his family. His works evoke profound traditional authority. One of Australia's leading art critics, John McDonald, is often quoted at the time of Bedford's 2007 retrospective in Sydney's MCA as saying: "If one had to choose a single indigenous artist to represent the state of Aboriginal art, it would be hard to go past Paddy Bedford."

Also featured in his work are historical events, such as the Bedford Downs Massacre - the brutal murder of a group of family members in the early 20th century in retaliation for killing a bullock. Yet, central to his work is reconciliation, referred to as "two-way".

Paddy Bedford was one of eight Australian indigenous artists commissioned to deliver a permanent work for the Musée du Quai Branly in Paris, for its opening in 2006. His work was honored later that year with a major retrospective at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Sydney that went on a national tour. An extraordinary achievement for an octogenarian, who only began his career as an artist less than a decade earlier.

Since his death in 2007, his reputation has increased. In 2013 the Australian Airline, Qantas, commissioned the external livery of a new Boeing 737-800 to reflect his work Medicine Pocket (2005). Moreover, his works are exhibited in Australia's major public galleries, as well as in private collections worldwide.

Selected Collections

Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, Australia
 Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, Australia
 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, Australia
 National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia
 Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia
 Lam Collection, University of San Antonio, Texas, USA
 The Araluen Art Collection, Alice Springs, Australia
 Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA), Sydney, Australia
 British Museum, London, United Kingdom
 Metropolitan Museum of Art (MoMA), New York, USA

Selected Exhibitions

<p>2024 <i>Art & This Place Tours</i>, Queensland Art Gallery Gallery of Modern Art Foundation, Queensland, Australia</p> <p>2023 <i>Dreaming with your Eyes Open</i>, SmithDavidson Gallery, Amsterdam, The Netherlands</p> <p>2021 <i>The Kimberley</i>, SmithDavidson Gallery, Amsterdam, The Netherlands</p> <p>2018 <i>Ancestral Modern: Australian Aboriginal Art from the Kaplan & Levi collection</i>, Blanton Museum at the University of Texas, Austin, USA</p> <p>2016 <i>Everywhen: The Eternal Present in Indigenous Art from Australia</i>, Harvard Art Museums, Cambridge, USA</p> <p>2015 <i>No Boundaries: Aboriginal Australian Contemporary Abstract Painting</i>, Perez Art Museum, Miami, USA <i>Signs and Traces. Contemporary Aboriginal Art</i>, Zamek Culture Centre, Poznan, Poland <i>Global Art Exhibition</i>, SmithDavidson Gallery, Amsterdam, The Netherlands</p> <p>2013/14 <i>Vivid Memories - An Aboriginal Art History</i>, Musée d'Aquitaine, Bordeaux, France</p> <p>2010 <i>Contemporary Aboriginal Painting from Australia</i>, Metropolitan Museum, New York City, USA <i>Remembering Forward. Australian Aboriginal Painting since 1960</i>, Museum Ludwig, Cologne, Germany</p> <p>2009 Solo: <i>Paddy Bedford: Crossing Frontiers</i>, Aboriginal Art Museum Utrecht (AAMU), Utrecht, The Netherlands</p> <p>2008 <i>The Other Thing - A Survey Show</i>, Charles Darwin University Art Collection, Darwin, Australia <i>Papunya Tula Artists 2008</i>, Melbourne, Australia <i>Ngurra Yurru Kulintjaku - Always Remembering Country</i>, Cross Cultural Art Exchange (CCA) at Harriet Place, Darwin, Australia <i>Marrangku Yara Polyantjaku Ngurrangka - Making Strong Paintings at Home</i>, Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs, Australia</p> <p>2006/8 Solo: <i>Paddy Bedford</i>, Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA), Sydney; Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth; Bendigo Art Gallery, Bendigo; University of Queensland Art Museum, Queensland, Australia</p>	<p>2006 <i>Land Marks</i>, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia</p> <p>2005 <i>Jirrawun in the House: A Contemporary Vision from the East Kimberley</i>, Parliament House, Canberra, Australia</p> <p>2004 <i>Talking about Abstraction</i>, University of New South Wales College of Fine Arts, Sydney, Australia <i>Spirit and Vision - Aboriginal Art</i>, Sammlung Essl, Klosterneuburg, Austria <i>Australian Culture Now</i>, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia</p> <p>2003 <i>Journey to Now: John Kaldor art projects and collection</i>, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia Solo: <i>Walking on the Line</i>, GRANTPIRRIE, Sydney, Australia</p> <p>2002/3 <i>Blood on the Spinifex</i>, Ian Potter Museum of Art, Melbourne, Australia</p> <p>2002 Solo: <i>Significant Paintings</i>, GRANTPIRRIE, Sydney, Australia</p> <p>2001 Solo: <i>Paddy Bedford</i>, Raft Artspace, Darwin, Australia</p> <p>2000 <i>Land Mark: Mirror Mark: Prints by Aboriginal artists from the collection of the Northern Territory</i>, Australian National University, Canberra, Australia; Columbia State University, Clifton, USA; Kluge-Ruhe Collection of Aboriginal Art University of Virginia, Charlottesville, USA</p> <p>1999 <i>Mapping Our Countries</i>, Djamu Gallery, Australian Museum, Sydney, Australia</p>
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Solo: *Paddy Bedford*, Museum of Contemporary Art Australia (MCA), Sydney, 2006



Bloodwood Yard, Lissadel Country

Natural earth pigments on Belgian linen
121.5 x 182.5 cm / 47.6 x 71.7 inch

Year: 1996

Price: \$ 30,000*

This work is accompanied by a certificate of authenticity

Provenance

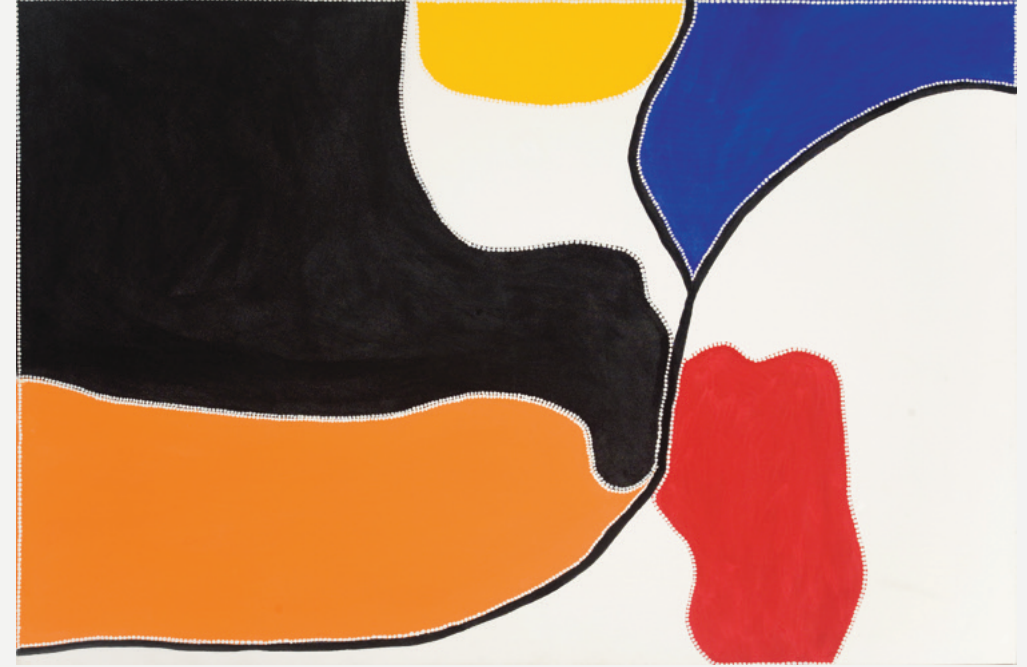
Kimberley Art, Victoria, Australia. Cat No. KAFT004/96
Gould Galleries, Victoria, Australia
Private collection, Queensland, Australia
Lawson~Menzies, Important Aboriginal Art, Sydney, Australia. June 2008, Lot No. 222
Menzies Estate Collection, Victoria, Australia

About the work

Freddie Timms spent his childhood at Bow River and Lissadell Stations where he worked as a stockman, handyman and fencer. He left Lissadell Station in 1985 and settled at the new community at Warmun where he began to paint, influenced by elders including Rover Thomas and Hector Jandanay.

Freddie Timms has become known for aerial map-like visions of country that are less concerned with ancestral associations as with tracing the responses and refuges of the Gidja people as they encountered the ruthlessness and brutality of colonisation. However, his political nature is characterized by more intimate interpretations of the experience rather than overtly political statements.

In what appeared as a new and beautiful sense of irregular geometry, soft yet boldly defined blocks of colour depicted the area. The stark black color fields are contrasted by a more colourful palette than the natural earth pigments widely adopted by other East Kimberley artists.



Untitled

Natural earth pigments on Belgian linen
121.5 x 182.5 cm / 47.6 x 71.7 inch

Year: 1996

Price: \$ 30,000*

This work is accompanied by a certificate of authenticity

Provenance

Kimberley Art, Victoria, Australia. Cat No. KAFT004/96
Gould Galleries, Victoria, Australia
Private collection, Queensland, Australia
Lawson~Menzies, Important Aboriginal Art, Sydney, Australia. June 2008, Lot No. 222
Menzies Estate Collection, Victoria, Australia
Private Collection, The Netherlands

About the work

Freddie painted for Waringarri Arts from the late 1980s developing his own personal style working exclusively with earth pigment until the mid 1990s when he began experimenting with colour. His more vivid interpretations of his country were first exhibited with Frank Watters in Sydney, and later Rob Gould in Melbourne. His works are maps of his country imbued with its history and spiritual connections. They are typified by expanses of flat colour delineated by white dotting, according to topography and geology. Included are the black soil country, hills, creeks, watercourses and waterholes, roads, stockyards, homesteads and Dreaming places of his travels.



Freddie Timms

Freddie Timms was born at Police Hole circa 1946 and followed in his father's footsteps, becoming a stockman on Lissadell Station as a young man. After an eventful life on stations throughout the East Kimberley he settled at Frog Hollow, a small outstation about 20 km from the newly established community at Warmun, and worked for a time as a gardener at the nascent Argyle Mine.

He began painting in 1986, in the company of elder artists such as Rover Thomas and Hector Jandanay, who were already achieving notoriety at this time. Waringarri Arts, in Kununurra, was newly established and Timms requested art materials from Joel Smoker, the first art coordinator to visit the community on a regular basis. Smoker recognised Freddie's potential in his first distinctive canvasses and noted his confident grasp of the medium from the outset.

During the last 25 years Timms has become renowned for depicting sites associated with the displacement of his people and the loss of their country. Yet rather than being overt political statements about the ruthlessness and brutality of colonization or the political process of dispossession, his intimate map-like interpretations of country are most commonly rendered with an experiential feel.

His first exhibition was held at Deutscher, Gertrude Street, in 1989 to critical acclaim. It included a superb masterpiece Mandangala, North Turkey Creek, 1989.

In what appeared as a new and beautiful sense of irregular geometry, soft yet boldly defined blocks of colour depicted the area of Glen Hill and the Argyle Diamond Mine to the north of Turkey Creek. The fact that it now lay beneath water, having been flooded by the damming of the Ord River made the work all the more poignant. There had been no consultation with the traditional Gidja owners. The places where he and his countrymen used walk and camp, along with all its ancestral burial grounds and sacred places, were simply buried beneath the rising waters.

During the mid 1990's Freddie traveled often in the company of Kimberley master, Rover Thomas. He painted a large body of works for Kimberley Art Gallery through its association with the Warmun Community, including two works which currently hold the artist's highest and third highest prices at auction. Both employ a broader, more colourful palette, than the natural earth pigments widely adopted by other East Kimberley artists. By 1999, Freddie Timms was represented by one of Sydney's most highly regarded dealers, Frank Watters. His exhibition that year explored the history of an Indigenous bushranger named Major who was shot by police in 1908, after killing whites at Blackfeller Creek. Timms eventually left Watters Gallery and returned to the Kimberley to establish the Jirrawun Aboriginal Art Corporation with help from artist and dealer Tony Oliver.

Interestingly source provenance appears to mean little in determining the value of secondary market sales for works by Freddie Timms, nor does the period works were painted, and whether acrylic, powder pigment or natural earth ochres were used as the medium. Size is, of course, the major price determinant along with the aesthetics of the image itself. Those works with a crisp clean contemporary look that achieve harmony and balance through a combination of shape and colour have sold successfully while those in which bright contrasting colours combine with an unbalanced composition seem to fair badly.

Overall works by Freddie Timms have steadily improved in value and he continues to produce works of great integrity and interest. Now the most important artist working at Jirrawun he is likely to be promoted professionally, shown in good galleries, and included in important institutions and collections during the coming years. There is no doubt that his work will endure and steadily gain in status over time.

The work illustrated was created in the late 1990's and depicts Biggaaninny (Piccaninny) Gorge, which runs through the Bungle Bungle ranges, the traditional land of the now deceased former Frog Hollow resident, and artist Jack Britten. Britten was the senior custodian of this area though he was forced to live away from it for a significant proportion of his life. The laterite pre-Devonian reef from which the range formed left the distinctive layering visible in the rocky cliffs to this day. These are clearly depicted in Timms' haunting rendition of the site, which was executed in local earth pigments on canvas. The yearly monsoon rains pour off the massive out-crops and are channeled through the deep gorges of Bigganinny Creek into to the Ord River.

Though he is yet to achieve a similar level of acclaim to that of the founders of the East Kimberley movement, Freddie Timms is foremost amongst those artists of the second generation.

Selected Collections

National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, Australia
 Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia
 National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia
 Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, Australia
 Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, Australia
 Gabrielle Pizzi Collection, Melbourne, Australia
 The Kelton Foundation, Santa Monica, USA
 Art Bank, Sydney, Australia
 Wollongong Art Gallery, Wollongong, Australia
 The Holmes à Court Collection, Perth, Australia
 The Collection of Colin and Elizabeth Laverty, Sydney, Australia
 Aboriginal Art Museum Utrecht (Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen), The Netherlands
 Hank Ebes Collection, Melbourne, Australia
 Gillian & Watson McAllister Collection, Sydney, Australia
 Jacqui McPhee Collection, Perth, Australia
 Fondation Burkhardt-Felder Arts et Culture, Motiers, Switzerland
 Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection of the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, USA
 Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, Australia

Selected Exhibitions

2021	<i>Voyage across Aboriginal Australia - Founders' Favourites</i> , Fondation Burkhardt-Felder Arts et Culture, Moitiers, Switzerland	2003	<i>True Stories: Art of the East Kimberley</i> , Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia <i>Kelly Culture: Reconstructing Ned Kelly</i> , State Library of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia <i>Jirrawun Jazz</i> , Raft Artspace, Darwin, Australia
2020	<i>ORIGINS, Australian Aboriginal Art from the SmithDavidson Collection</i> , SmithDavidson Gallery, Amsterdam, The Netherlands	2002	<i>Blood of the Spinifex</i> , The Ian Potter Museum of Art, Melbourne, Australia; National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia
2019	<i>Contemporary Australian Aboriginal Art: A curated selection</i> , SmithDavidson Gallery, Amsterdam, The Netherlands	2001	<i>18th Telstra NATSIAA</i> , Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, Australia <i>A Century of Collecting 1901-2001</i> , Ivan Dougherty Gallery, College of Fine Arts, University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia <i>Four Men, Four Paintings</i> , Raft Space, Darwin, Australia
2018	<i>Desert River Sea: Kimberley Art Then & Now</i> , Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, Australia	2000	<i>17th Telstra NATSIAA</i> , Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, Australia <i>Landmark: Mirror Mark: Mal Nairn Auditorium</i> , Northern Territory University, Darwin, Australia; Columbus State University, Georgia, USA; The Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, USA; Drill Hall Gallery, Australian National University, Canberra, Australia <i>Balgo: Contemporary Australian Art from Balgo Hills</i> , Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, Australia
2016	<i>Martumili Artists: Everywhen</i> , Harvard Art Museums, Cambridge, USA	1999	<i>16th Telstra NATSIAA</i> , Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, Australia <i>My Country</i> , Northern Territory University Gallery, Darwin, Australia
2012	<i>On Country: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art</i> , Queensland Art Gallery Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, Australia	1998	<i>The Laverty Collection</i> , Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, Australia <i>Thousand Journeys: Aboriginal Art from North WA</i> , touring galleries in Tamworth, Newcastle, Albury, Mornington Peninsula, Ballarat, Mildura, United Kingdom
2013	<i>Mapping Our World: Terra Incognita to Australia</i> , National Library of Australia, Canberra, Australia	1996	<i>Utopia Art</i> , Sydney, Australia <i>Rover Thomas: I Want to Paint</i> , National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, Australia
2011	<i>My Country: Works from Indigenous Australian Artists</i> , Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, Australia <i>The Way We Are Now: Indigenous Art of Australia</i> , Lowe Art Museum, University of Miami, Miami, USA	1993/94	<i>ARATJARA, Art of the First Australians</i> , Touring: Kunstammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Dusseldorf; Hayward Gallery, London; Louisiana Museum, Humlebaek, Denmark
2008	<i>Paintings from remote communities: Indigenous Australian art from the Laverty collection</i> , Newcastle Regional Gallery, Newcastle, Australia <i>Last Tango at Wyndham</i> , Raft Artspace, Darwin, Australia <i>Jirrawun Colour: Rammey Ramsey & Freddie Timms</i> , Raft Artspace, Darwin <i>Tjukurpa Pulkatjara: The Power of the Law</i> , Aboriginal Art Museum Utrecht, Utrecht, The Netherlands	1993	<i>Images of Power, Aboriginal Art of the Kimberley</i> , National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia
2007	<i>Cultural Warriors: National Indigenous Art Triennial</i> , National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, Australia	1991	<i>Aboriginal Art and Spirituality</i> , High Court of Australia, Australia <i>Flash Pictures</i> , National Gallery of Australia, Australia
2006	<i>Prism: Contemporary Australian Art</i> , Bridgestone Museum of Art, Tokyo, Japan <i>The second Shalom Gamarada Aboriginal Art Exhibition</i> , Shalom College, University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia <i>Great Masters</i> , Aboriginal Art Museum, Utrecht, The Netherlands <i>Dreaming Their Way: Australian Aboriginal Women Painters</i> , National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, D.C., USA	1992	<i>9th Telstra NATSIAA</i> , Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, Australia
2005	<i>Interesting Times: Focus on contemporary Australian art</i> , Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, Australia	1991	<i>8th Telstra NATSIAA</i> , Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, Australia
2004	<i>Crossing Country: The Alchemy of Western Arnhem Land Art</i> , Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia	1990	<i>7th Telstra NATSIAA</i> , Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, Australia
		1989	<i>Turkey Creek: Recent Work</i> , Deutscher Gertrude Street, Melbourne, Australia
		1984	<i>Koori Art '84</i> , Artspace, Sydney, Australia



This work is accompanied by a certificate of authenticity

Provenance

Painted for Wati Kutjara (Indigenous Artist Management), Australia
Private Collection, The Netherlands

Maruwa

Acrylic on linen
200 x 244 cm / 78.7 x 96.1 inch

Year: 2018

Price: POA



Untitled (Marawa)

Acrylic on linen
76 x 84 cm / 29.9 x 33.1 inch

Year: 2019

Price: \$ 25,000*

This work is accompanied by a certificate of authenticity

Provenance

Painted for Yanda Aboriginal Art, Alice Springs, Australia
Private Collection, The Netherlands

Exhibited

ORIGINS, Australian Aboriginal Art from the SmithDavidson collection, SmithDavidson Gallery, Amsterdam, The Netherlands, 2020

About the work

This painting depicts designs associated with the swamp site of Marawa, situated slightly west of Wilkinkarra (Lake Mackay). There is also a rockhole and soakage waters at this site. During ancestral times a large group of Tingari men travelled to Marawa from the west, and after arriving at the site, passed beneath the earth's surface and continued traveling underground. It is also said that a huge ancestral snake sleeps in this swamp. Since events associated with the Tingari Cycle are of a secret nature no further detail is given. Generally, the Tingari are a group of ancestral beings of the Dreaming who travelled over vast stretches of the country, performing rituals and creating and shaping particular sites. The Tingari men were usually followed by Tingari women and were accompanied by novices, and their travels and adventures are enshrined in a number of song cycles. These ancestral stories form part of the teachings of the post initiatory youths today, as well as providing explanations for contemporary customs.



Image Courtesy World Red Eye (2015)

Warlimpirrnga Tjapaltjarri

Warlimpirrnga Tjapaltjarri was born around 1958 east of Kiwirrkurra in Western Australia. Until 1984, at an age of approx 25, Warlimpirrnga and his family lived a traditional nomadic life, with no contact to or knowledge of the outside world.

Late 1984, the international headlines were filled with the 'discovery' of this last group of Australian First Nations who until the late 20th century had managed to retain their traditional lifestyle in complete isolation. These so-called 'last of the nomads' or 'lost tribe' of nine Pintupi walked in from the bush west of Lake Owen that year and for the first time came into contact with western civilization.

Six of these nine First Nations became artists: Warlimpirrnga, Thomas, Walala, Yukultji, Yalti and Tjakaria. From these six Warlimpirrnga was the first who started painting after carefully observing other artists from the community at Kiwirrkurra paint for a long time. Consequently, within three years, Warlimpirrnga transformed from a nomad with a simple traditional lifestyle to one of the leading artists from the Papunya Tula Artists collective. In 1987 he completed his first painting for Papunya Tula Artists and in 1988 he held his first exhibition in Melbourne, at Gabrielle Pizzi Gallery. The entire collection was purchased and donated to the National Gallery of Victoria.

Warlimpirrnga paints primarily in two styles; he makes extensive use of geometric shapes to depict the stories of the Tingari or he uses lines made up of carefully placed dots in his dreamings that depict holy Lake Mackay, a site of which he is one of the custodians. He uses the same dot-technique as other Pintupi artists like his brothers, Walala and Thomas. The Tingari are the mythical ancestors of the Pintupi from the 'Dream Time' in which they wandered the earth performing rituals giving life to and physically shaping the landscape. Everything on earth obeys the laws that have been formulated by the Tingari. The meaning of Tingari paintings are multiple, but remain largely a secret for non-insiders.

Despite the late start of his career, Warlimpirrnga is widely considered one of the most important contemporary First Nations artist. His work has appeared in several prominent galleries and museums in Australia and around the world, including the National Gallery of Victoria, Musée du quai Branly Paris and Pérez Art Museum Miami (PAMM). Warlimpirrnga travels back and forth between Alice Springs and his native land around Kiwirrkurra.

In Aboriginal terms the Tingari were a group of ancestral beings that emerged from the earth and conducted activities that led to the formation of the landscape and its inhabitants. The content of these ancient stories remains the exclusive knowledge of the initiated men. Warlimpirrnga's paintings often depicts *tali tjuta* (many sandhills) and *kapi* (clay pans) of the Maruwa area West of Lake McKay and Kalpartii which lies further south.

*"I tasted the sugar and it tasted so sweet,
like the Kulun Kulun flower."*

In a minimal linear style, the artist depicts a particular site known as Minatapinya, a large swamp south of Maruwa which is where Tingari men camped as they travelled east towards Wilkinkarra (Lake McKay) in Western Australia. The area is known for the Water Snake that travelled through this way in the mythical creation time, the snake entered the water and now lives under ground. According to the artist, the wavy lines mark the watery areas that are found around Lake MacKay.

Selected Collections

Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia
 The Kelton Foundation Collection, Santa Monica, USA
 Macquarie Group Collection, Sydney, Australia
 National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia
 Bank Art Museum Moree, Moree, Australia
 Griffith University Art Collection, Queensland College of Art, Brisbane, Australia
 Harvard Art Museums, Cambridge, USA
 Hank Ebes Collection, Melbourne, Australia
 The Luczo Family Collection, USA
 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, Australia
 Art Bank, Sydney, Australia
 Museo Sa Bassa Blanca, Mallorca, Spain
 Musee National des Arts Africains et Océaniens, Paris, France
 Corrigan Collection, Sydney, Australia
 Luciano Benetton Collection, Venice, Italy

Selected Exhibitions

2023	<i>Dreaming with your Eyes Open</i> , SmithDavidson Gallery, Amsterdam, The Netherlands	2009	<i>Tjukurrpa Palurukutu, Kutjupawana Palyantjanya - Same Stories, A New Way</i> , Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs, Australia <i>Pro Community</i> , Papunya Tula Artists, Germany
2022	<i>Origins</i> , SmithDavidson Gallery, New York, USA	2008	Adelaide Biennale of Australian Art: <i>Handle With Care</i> , Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, Australia
2021/22	<i>Irrititja Kuwarri Tjungu (Past & Present Together): 50 years of Papunya Tula Artists</i> , Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection of the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, USA	2007	<i>Pintupi - Mixed Exhibition</i> , Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs, Australia
2021	<i>Papunya 50 Years, 1971 - 2021</i> , SmithDavidson Gallery, Amsterdam, The Netherlands <i>Aboriginalities</i> , Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium, Brussels, Belgium	2006	<i>Papunya Tula Artists 2006</i> , Melbourne, Australia <i>Land Marks</i> , National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia
2020	<i>ORIGINS, Australian Aboriginal Art from the SmithDavidson Collection</i> , SmithDavidson Gallery, Amsterdam, The Netherlands <i>Mapa Wiya (Your Map's Not Needed): Australian Aboriginal Art from the Fondation Opale</i> , The Menil Collection, Houston, USA	2005	<i>Pintupi Artists</i> , Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs, Australia 22nd Telstra NATSIAA, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, Australia
2019	<i>No Boundaries</i> , Sol Taplin Gallery & SmithDavidson Gallery, Miami USA <i>Desert Painters of Australia - paintings from the Steve Martin Collection</i> , Gagosian Galleries, New York / Los Angeles, USA	2004	<i>Talking About Abstraction</i> , Ivan Dougherty Gallery, University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia <i>Pintupi Artists</i> , Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs, Australia <i>Native Title Business - Contemporary Indigenous Art</i> , Koorie Heritage Trust, Melbourne; Gippsland Art Gallery, Sale; Carnegie Gallery & Salamanca Arts Centre, Hobart; Ararat Gallery, Ararat; University of Tasmania, Australia <i>Looking Closely at Country</i> , Ivan Dougherty Gallery, College of Fine Arts, The University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia
2017	<i>Modern Masters</i> , SmithDavidson Gallery, Miami, USA	2003	<i>Pintupi Artists</i> , Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs, Australia
2016	<i>No Boundaries: Aboriginal Australian Contemporary Abstract Painting</i> , Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History, Detroit; Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art Cornell University, New York, USA	2002/3	<i>Native Title Business - Contemporary Indigenous Art</i> , Toowoomba Regional Art Gallery, Queensland; Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, Townsville; Noosa Regional Gallery, Tewantin; National Museum of Australia, Canberra; Cooloolool Shire Public Gallery, Gympie; Cairns Regional Gallery, Cairns; Queensland Museum, Brisbane; Gladstone Regional Art Gallery & Museum, Gladstone; Daringa Shire Art Gallery, Blackwater, Australia
2015	<i>No Boundaries: Aboriginal Australian Contemporary Abstract Painting</i> , Nevada Museum of Art; Portland Institute for Contemporary Art; Perez Art Museum, Miami, USA <i>Signs and Traces - Contemporary Aboriginal Art</i> , Zamek Cultural Institute, Poznan, Poland	2001	<i>Pintupi Exhibition</i> , Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs, Australia <i>Dreamscapes - Contemporary Desert Art</i> , Mostings Hus, Frederiksberg, Denmark
2013	Recent Works, Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs, Australia Desert Mob 2013, Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs, Australia	2000	<i>Pintupi Men</i> , Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs, Australia <i>Papunya Tula: Genesis and Genius</i> , Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia
2014	38th Alice Prize, Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs, Australia	1999	Exhibition with Ray James Tjangala, Melbourne, Australia
2012	<i>Visual Rhythm</i> , Cross Cultural Art Exchange, Darwin, Australia <i>Unique Perspectives: Papunya Tula Artists and the Alice Springs Community</i> , Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs, Australia <i>Dokumenta (13)</i> , Fridericianum Museum, Kassel, Germany	1996	C.A.A.A.C.E., Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs, Australia
2011	<i>Recent Pintupi Works</i> , Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs, Australia	1991/2	<i>Friendly Country, Friendly People</i> , Touring Exhibition, Araluen Art Centre, Alice Springs, Australia
2010	<i>Desert Icons Australasian Arts Project</i> , Singapore <i>Wilinkarralakutu - Journeys to Lake Mackay</i> , Cross Cultural Art Exchange, Darwin, Australia	1990	<i>L'Été Australien à Montpellier</i> , Musée Fabre Gallery, Montpellier, France
2009	<i>Papunya 2009</i> , Senior Pintupi Artists, Melbourne, Australia <i>Nganampatju Kanpatju Winki, Nganampatju Yara Winkii - All Our Paintings, All Our Stories</i> , Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs, Australia	1989	<i>Mythscales</i> , National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia

This work is accompanied by a certificate of authenticity

Provenance

Painted for Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs, Australia
The Collection of Colin and Elizabeth Laverty, Sydney, Australia
Private Collection, The Netherlands

Exhibited

Paintings from Remote Communities: Indigenous Australian Art from the Laverty Collection, Sydney, Australia,
Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth, New Zealand;
Newcastle Art Gallery, Newcastle, Australia, 2007/2008

Literature

*Beyond Sacred: Recent Painting from Australia's Remote Aboriginal Communities:
The Collection of Colin and Elizabeth Laverty*, Hardie Grant Books, Melbourne, 2008, p. 63 (illus.)
*Beyond Sacred: Australian Aboriginal Art: The Collection of Colin and Elizabeth
Laverty*, edition II, Kleimeyer Industries Pty Ltd, Melbourne, 2011, p. 65 (illus.)

About the work

This painting depicts designs associated with the rockhole and soakage water site of Marrapinti, to the west of the Pollock Hills in Western Australia.
The circles are rockholes and the lines are the sandhills surrounding the area.

A large group of senior women camped at this rockhole making the nose-bones which are worn through a hole in the nose-web. These nose-bones were originally worn by both men and women but are now only worn by the older generations on ceremonial occasions. The women later travelled east passing through Wala Wala, Ngamina and Kiwirrkura.



Untitled

Synthetic polymer paint on linen
61.5 cm x 91.5 / 24.2 x 36 inch

Year: 2002

Price: \$ 26,000*



Naata Nungurrayi

Naata Nungurrayi was born deep in the Gibson Desert at the rock-hole site of Kumil, circa 1932. She was a highly respected senior Elder and is internationally recognised as one of the most important artists from the Western Desert. Together with members of her immediate family, Naata led a traditional bush life, traveling among the sandhills and clusters of rocky outcrops that erupt ceremoniously across the desert floor. The cycle of nomadic life continued until April 1964 when, in the midst of severe drought conditions, the family decided to join the growing migration of Pintupi people who had made their way to the government settlement of Papunya, some 500 kilometres to the east.

During their journey in to Papunya, Naata's family was joined by another small family group, which included Yala Yala Gibbs Tjungurrayi, his wife Ningura Napurrula and their family. Together they travelled nearly 400 kilometres to the foothills of Yamunturrngu (Mount Liebig), where a Northern Territory Welfare Branch patrol led by Jeremy Long and Nosepeg Tjupurrula met the group, after spotting the smoke from their early morning fire.

The group arrived at Papunya during a particularly difficult period in the troubled settlement's history. The ailing inhabitants, separated from their traditional land and source of food, were experiencing a significant increase in their already high mortality rate. Naata, along with her sister Nancy, began working in the community kitchen, where they help provide meals and rations.

In the dismal conditions that prevailed at Papunya, Naata would have witnessed the genesis of the Western Desert art movement in mid-1971, under the encouragement of a school teacher Geoffrey Bardon. From this poor circumstance a miraculous period in Australian art emerged, one that expressed most vividly the Pintupi's deep desire to return to their distant homelands in the west.

Initially, Naata and her family spent brief periods at the Pintupi outposts of Yaiyai and Waruwiya, approximately 50 kilometers west of Papunya. Once the settlements of Kintore (Walungurru) and Kiwirrkura were established in the early mid-1980s, they were at last able to relocate closer to the country Naata had traversed in her early life

Naata, along with a small group of women from Kintore and Kiwirrkura, began painting for Papunya Tula artists in June 1996. Her brother George Tjungurrayi and son Kenny Williams Tjampitjinpa were already established painters for the company. Initially Naata was a reticent member of the women's painting group, often sitting quietly beside her inseparable late sister Ngangi (Nancy Nungurrayi). She worked slowly on small compositions of lines and roundels that loosely reflected the classic Tingari paintings made famous by the male painters of Papunya Tula.

Naata, like many of the new women painters, began painting the sites and narratives that chart the vast tracts of country surrounding Kiwirrkura. Many early works depicted the rockhole site of Marrapinti, which is a pivotal destination in Pintupi life, where men and woman gathered to have their septums pierced for ceremonial purposes. As Naata's confidence grew, so too did her presence among the painters. She developed a unique iconography teeming with giant 'U' shapes, mollusc-like forms depicting rocky outcrops and deep-etched lines representing the endless surrounding sandhills. She emerged as an instinctive painter, whose command of line, colour and form is immediate and breathtaking. Artist and art are rarely so inextricably linked, each a precious balance of cultural authority, artistic spontaneity and whim.

Few contemporary First Nations painters have sustained the attention of curators and collectors so feverishly. Naata has contributed to many major national and international exhibitions including Papunya Tula: Genesis and Genius at the Art Gallery of New South Wales in 2000 and the landmark 2009 exhibition in New York City, Nganana Tjungurrayi Tjurkurpa Nnintintjakitja – We Are Here Sharing Our Dreaming. A solo exhibition of her work appeared at the Papunya Tula Artist gallery in Alice Springs in 2011.

Her paintings are sought after by most major Australian galleries and collectors worldwide and paintings by Naata have been acquired by the Art Gallery of New South Wales, the National Gallery of Victoria and the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory. She has also been a regular exhibitor at Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award and in 2002 her entry depicting the rockhole site of Marrapinti was highly commended by the judges.

Naata's artworks have been exhibited in the 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, 22nd, 23rd, 24th, and 25th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards ("NATSIAA"), a prestigious Award established in 1984 to recognise the important contribution made by Indigenous artists, and is now one of the premier national events in the Australian Indigenous art calendar.

In 2003 Naata Nungurrayi was honoured with having one of her paintings chosen to appear on an Australia Post International stamp, and was named among the Top 50 of Australia's Most Collectable Artists by Australian Art Collector in 2004.

Naata passed away on September 24th, 2021.

Selected Collections

National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, Australia
 Australian National University, Canberra, Australia
 The Holmes à Court Collection, Perth, Australia
 Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia
 National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia
 Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, Australia
 AIATSIS Collection, Canberra, Australia
 Artbank, Sydney, Australia
 Aboriginal Art Museum Utrecht (Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen), The Netherlands
 Araluen Art Centre, Alice Springs, Australia
 Griffith University Art Collection, Brisbane, Australia
 Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, Australia
 Helen Read Collection, Australia
 Harland and Wolff Collection, Ireland
 Hank Ebes Collection, Melbourne, Australia
 The Luczo Family Collection, USA
 University of Technology Sydney Art Collection, Sydney, Australia
 Harvard Art Museums, Cambridge, USA
 Steve Martin & Anne Stringfield Collections, USA
 Kluge-Ruhe Collection of the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, USA
 University of the Sunshine Coast Collection, Sippy Downs, Australia
 Luciano Benetton Collection, Venice, Italy

Selected Exhibitions

2024 *Ladies from Papunya*, SmithDavidson Gallery, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
 2021 *Papunya 50 Years, 1971 - 2021*, SmithDavidson Gallery Amsterdam, The Netherlands
 2020 *ORIGINS, Australian Aboriginal Art from the SmithDavidson Collection*, SmithDavidson Gallery, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
 2019 *Desert Painters of Australia*, Larry Gagosian Gallery, New York, USA - from the Steve Martin & Anne Stringfield Collections and Kluge-Ruhe Collection of the University of Virginia, USA
Naata Nungurrayi Panels, Kambri Cultural Centre, Drill Hall Gallery, Australian National University, Canberra, Australia
 2018 *East meets West*, SmithDavidson Gallery, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

2012 *Unique Perspectives: Papunya Tula Artists and the Alice Springs Community*, Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs, Australia
unDISCLOSED, 2nd National Indigenous Art Triennial, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, Australia
 2011 *Sister, Brother Nyarrumparra*, Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs, Australia
 2010 *Desert Country*, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, Australia
 2009 *The Desert Mob Art Show*, Araluen Art Centre, Alice Springs, Australia
 2008 *The Other Thing - A Survey Show*, Charles Darwin University Art Collection, Darwin, Australia
Ngurra Yurru Kulintjaku - Always Remembering Country, Cross Cultural Art Exchange (CCA) at Harriet Place, Darwin, Australia
Marrangu Yara Polyantjaku Ngurrangka - Making Strong Paintings at Home, Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs, Australia
 25th Telstra NATSIAA, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, Australia
 2007 24th Telstra NATSIAA, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, Australia
 2006 23th Telstra NATSIAA, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, Australia
 2005 22th Telstra NATSIAA, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, Australia
 2003 20th Telstra NATSIAA, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, Australia
A Way Through, The Sue and Ian Bernadt Collection, Aboriginal Paintings by Women Artists, Central TAFE Art Gallery, Perth, Australia
 2002 19th Telstra NATSIAA, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, Australia
Paintings from our Country, Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art, Adelaide, Australia
 2001 *Pintupi - Mixed Exhibition*, Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs, Australia
Spirituality and Australian Aboriginal Art, Comunidad de Madrid touring exhibition, Spain
 18th Telstra NATSIAA, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, Australia
Papunya Tula 30th Anniversary Exhibition, Canberra, Australia
 2000 17th Telstra NATSIAA, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, Australia
Papunya Tula: Genesis and Genius, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia
 1999 *Twenty-Five Years and Beyond*, Flinders University of South Australia, Adelaide, Australia
 1997 *The Desert Mob Art Show*, Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs, Australia



Tuli Tjuta (Sandhills Many)

Acrylic on canvas
122 x 182 cm / 48 x 71.1 inch

Year: 2009

Price: \$ 45,000*

This work is accompanied by a certificate of authenticity

Provenance

Yanda Aboriginal Art, Alice Springs, Australia
Private Collection, The Netherlands

Exhibited

ART & INTERIOR Modern Aboriginal Art, Marcel Wolterinck, Laren, The Netherlands, 2014/15
Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy, 2011

Literature

TRA, *Edge of Becoming*, Palazzo Fortuny, 54th edition La Biennale di Venezia, Italy, p. 77 (illus.)

About the work

This design represents the most important geographical feature of the Western Deserts (Great Sandy Desert, Gibson Desert, Little Sandy Desert), being the east/west parallel sand dunes which can run unbroken for hundreds of kilometers and in places attaining heights of 30 meters.

Esther paints her mother and fathers dreaming and the traditional homelands associated with her ancestral heritage. These include the sites of Yumari, Punkilpirri and Tjalili. These sites are important for ceremonies and as reliable sources for water and food plants. Esther's works incorporate the sand-hills (tuli) and rock escarpments (puli) of her traditional homeland.

The representation of landforms is associated with the physical and spiritual connection to the earth and can also be seen in other decorations, such as body scarifying, ground designs and incised wooden implements.

The bold and strong flowing lines of this painting on the deep red background gives the viewer a good sense of the immense scope of the Australian Western desert and its "Tuli Tjuta" (many sand-hills).

This painting was exhibited at the Venice Biennale in 2011.



Esther Giles Nampitjinpa

Esther Giles Nampitjinpa is a distinguished Australian First Nations artist whose work has garnered significant recognition in the realm of contemporary Indigenous art.

Born around 1945 in the remote region of Haasts Bluff, Northern Territory, Nampitjinpa belongs to the Pintupi people. Her journey from a traditional upbringing to becoming a celebrated artist reflects a deep connection to her heritage and a commitment to preserving and sharing the stories of her culture through her art.

Nampitjinpa's early life was steeped in the customs and traditions of her people. Growing up in the vast desert landscapes, she was immersed in the rich oral histories and cultural practices that defined her community. Her family played a crucial role in her upbringing, with elders passing down knowledge about the land, survival skills, and the intricate stories of their ancestors. This cultural foundation would later become the cornerstone of her artistic expression.

Before turning to art, Nampitjinpa led a life typical of many Indigenous women of her generation. She worked in various roles, including as a domestic worker and in community services, to support her family. These experiences, combined with her deep cultural roots, eventually influenced her artistic journey. It was not until the late 1980s and early 1990s that Nampitjinpa began to paint, joining the burgeoning Indigenous art movement that sought to bring traditional stories to contemporary audiences.

Nampitjinpa's art is characterized by its bold use of color and intricate dotting techniques, a hallmark of Western Desert art. Her paintings often depict the sacred sites, Dreamtime stories, and landscapes of her ancestral land. Each piece is a visual narrative, encapsulating the spiritual and cultural significance of the places and stories she portrays. The meticulous dots and lines in her work create a sense of movement and depth, drawing viewers into the rich tapestry of her cultural heritage.

One of the defining aspects of Nampitjinpa's work is her ability to convey complex cultural narratives through abstract forms. Her paintings are not merely representations of the physical world but are imbued with layers of meaning and spiritual significance. This ability to blend the tangible with the intangible has made her work highly regarded both within her community and in the broader art world.

Her paintings have been exhibited in major galleries and museums across Australia and abroad, including the Art Gallery of New South Wales, the National Gallery of Australia, and the Museum of Contemporary First Nations Art in the Netherlands. These exhibitions have played a pivotal role in raising awareness about Indigenous art and culture, showcasing the richness and diversity of First Nations artistic traditions.

Nampitjinpa's contribution to art extends beyond her own creations. As an elder in her community, she plays a vital role in passing down cultural knowledge to younger generations. Through her art and mentorship, she ensures that the stories and traditions of the Pintupi people continue to thrive. Her work is a bridge between the past and the present, a testament to the enduring power of cultural heritage.

In recognition of her contributions to Indigenous art and culture, Nampitjinpa has received numerous accolades and awards. Her paintings are sought after by collectors and institutions, reflecting their artistic and cultural value. Despite her success, Nampitjinpa remains deeply connected to her roots, drawing inspiration from the land and stories that have shaped her life.

Esther Giles Nampitjinpa's legacy is one of resilience, creativity, and cultural pride. Her art not only celebrates the beauty and depth of Indigenous traditions but also serves as a powerful medium for cultural preservation and storytelling. Through her vibrant paintings, Nampitjinpa continues to inspire and educate, leaving an indelible mark on the landscape of contemporary Australian art.

Selected Collections

James McCourt Collection, USA
The Kelton Foundation, USA
The Lagerberg-Swift Collection
The Luczo Collection, USA
The Kerry Stokes Collection, Australia
The Corrigan Collection, Australia
James McCourt Collection, Australia
Private Collections, Australia and Overseas



Esther Giles Nampitjinpa & Bill Whiskey Tjapaltjarri on the Wall at EXPO Chicago 2024

Selected Exhibitions

- 2024 *Ladies from Papunya*, SmithDavidson Gallery, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
- 2022 *Origins*, SmithDavidson Gallery, New York, USA
- 2021 *Country in Mind*, curated by Christopher Bassi, Caboolture Regional Art Gallery, Queensland, Australia
- 2020 *ORIGINS, Australian Aboriginal Art from the SmithDavidson Collection*, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
- 2018 *Salon des Refusés 2018*, Charles Darwin University Art Gallery, Darwin, Australia
Western Desert Sublime: The Craig Edwards Gift To The Anu, Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, Australia
- 2017 *Tarnanthi Festival 2017*, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, Australia
Modern Masters, SmithDavidson Gallery, Miami, USA
National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards (NATSIAAs), Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, Australia
Desert Mob Exhibition 2017, Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs, Australia
Wynne Prize 2017, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia
Parrtjima - A Festival in Light 2017, Alice Springs, Australia
Wisdom & Nature: In Aid of Le Ciel Foundation, Phillips New York, New York, USA
- 2009 *Painting the Country*, Cross Cultural Art Exchange, Australia
Tjukurrpa Palurukutu, Kutjupawana Palyantjanya - Same Stories - A New Way, Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs, Australia
Nganampatju Kanpatja Winjki, Ngnampatju Yara Winkii - All Our Paintings, All Our Stories, Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs, Australia
- 2016 *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards(NATSIAAs)*, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, Australia
- 2015 *Tarnanthi Festival 2015*, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, Australia
- 2014 *Dreamings: Australian Aboriginal Art meets DeChirico*, Museo Carlo Bilotti, Aranciera di Villa Borghese, Italy
ART & INTERIOR Modern Aboriginal Art, Marcel Wolterinck, Laren, The Netherlands
- 2013/14 *Vivid Memories - An Aboriginal Art History*, Musée d'Aquitaine, Bordeaux, France
- 2011 TRA, *Edge of Becoming*, Palazzo Fortuny, 54th edition La Biennale di Venezia, Italy; Also published and illustrated in catalogue



Parwalla

Synthetic polymer paint on linen
75 x 150 cm / 29.5 x 59.1 inch

Year: 2001

Price: \$ 35,000*

Inscribed on verso:
Artist's name, size and Warlayirti Artists cat 422/01

This work is accompanied by a certificate of authenticity

Provenance

Painted for Warlayirti Artists, Balgo Hills, Australia
Raft Artspace, Darwin, Australia
The Collection of Colin and Elizabeth Laverty, Sydney, Australia
Purchased in September 2001
Private collection, The Netherlands

Literature

Beyond Sacred: Recent Painting from Australia's Remote Aboriginal Communities: The Collection of Colin and Elizabeth Laverty, Hardie Grant Books, Melbourne, Australia, 2008, p. 116 (illustrated)
Beyond Sacred: Australian Aboriginal Art: The Collection of Colin and Elizabeth Laverty, edition II, Kleimeyer Industries Pty Ltd, Melbourne, Australia, 2011, p. 128 (illustrated)

About the work

This work exemplifies the physical and spiritual connection of the artist to her country, in a symbiotic relationship that informs the entirety of Nyumi's artistic output. Parwalla is the country where Nyumi lived as a child with her mother, before losing her in a tragic accident. After this, Nyumi led a nomadic existence with her family group, ultimately settling in the Wirrimanu community at Balgo, where she commenced painting in 1987 for the Warlayirti Artists cooperative.

The symbols depicted in Nyumi's works are inherently feminine. She represents campsites, bush tucker, native flora and fauna and women's food-gathering implements. These themes are rendered in a delicate, jewel-like style and soft palette of pastel yellows, oranges, pinks and creams, removed from the vigorous, painterly style and bright colors idiosyncratic to Balgo. Perkins highlights the influence of Nyumi's matrilineal Pintupi heritage, and associates her with that extraordinary generation of desert women artists, beginning in the 1980s with Emily Kam Kngwarreye, followed by Pintupi artists at Kintore and Kiwirrkurra and spectacularly reinvented by the women artists at Warlayirti.



Elizabeth Nyumi Nungurrayi

Elizabeth Nyumi Nungurrayi was born in the bush near Jupiter Well in Western Australia. She is a celebrated Australian Indigenous artist whose work reflects her deep connection to the land and her cultural heritage. She belongs to the Pintupi language family through her mother's side, specifically from the country of Nynmi, near Kiwirrkurra in the Western Desert. Her father hailed from Alyarra, a region associated with the Ngaanyatjarra people.

Nyumi's early life was marked by both loss and resilience. As a young girl, she tragically lost her mother at Kanari soakwater near Jupiter Well. After this, Nyumi and her family led a nomadic existence, moving across the vast desert landscape. Eventually, they settled in the Wirrimanu community at Balgo, a pivotal moment in Nyumi's life as it marked the beginning of her journey as an artist.

In 1987, Nyumi began painting for the Warlayirti Artists cooperative in Balgo. This artistic endeavour allowed her to explore and express the rich cultural stories of her heritage, particularly the Dreamings associated with bush food from her childhood country. Initially, Nyumi's work featured fluent lines in earthy tones, but over time, she developed a distinctive style characterized by thick impasto dotting. This technique created textured canvases where motifs of campsites, Coolamons, digging sticks, and bush tucker stood out, embodying the physical and spiritual connection to her land. Nyumi's role within her community extends beyond her artistic contributions. She is also a dancer and an enthusiastic teacher, dedicated to passing on traditional dances and songs to the younger generation. This commitment ensures that the cultural practices of her people remain vibrant and alive.

In her personal life, Nyumi married fellow artist Palmer Gordon. Together, they had four daughters, three of whom followed in their mother's artistic footsteps. Nyumi's encouragement and support were instrumental in their development as artists.

Elizabeth Nyumi Nungurrayi's work gained widespread recognition in the late 1990s, culminating in her first solo exhibition, "Parwalla," at Raft Artspace in 2001.

A painting from this series was later featured in the 2004 Biennale of Sydney, showcased at the Museum of Contemporary Art. In this series, Nyumi's connection to her childhood country is powerfully rendered, exemplifying her ability to translate the symbiotic relationship between artist and land into a visual language.

Nyumi's art is inherently feminine, depicting campsites, native flora and fauna, and women's food-gathering implements. Her delicate, jewel-like palette of pastel yellows, oranges, pinks, and creams sets her apart from the more vigorous styles of her contemporaries in Balgo.

Her work is often compared to that of other notable desert women artists, such as Emily Kam Kngwarray, highlighting her significant role in the evolution of contemporary Indigenous art.

Elizabeth Nyumi Nungurrayi remains a vital cultural figure, whose art not only preserves the stories of her people but also shares them with the world. Her paintings are more than just visual expressions; they are a testament to her enduring connection to her country and her commitment to keeping her culture alive.

Selected Collections

National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, Australia
 Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, Australia
 National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia
 Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, Australia
 Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA), Sydney, Australia
 Artbank, Sydney, Australia
 The Holmes à Court Collection, Perth, Australia
 Morven Estate, USA
 Helen Read Collection, Australia
 Harland and Wolff Collection, Ireland
 Aboriginal Art Museum Utrecht (Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen), The Netherlands
 The Collection of Colin and Elizabeth Laverty, Sydney, Australia

Selected Exhibitions

2018	<i>Ancestral Modern: Australian Aboriginal Art from the Kaplan & Levi Collection</i> , Blanton Museum - University of Texas, Austin, USA	2000	17th Telstra NATSIAA, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, Australia 5th National Indigenous Heritage Art Award, Art of Place, Old, Parliament House, Canberra, Australia
2013	<i>Balgo Survey</i> , Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne, Australia <i>Warlayirti Artists</i> , Desert Mob Exhibition, Alice Springs, Australia	2002	<i>Desert Painters of Australia</i> , National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia
2004	Solo: Biennale of Sydney, Sydney, Australia Solo: <i>Elizabeth Nyumi</i> , Raft Artspace, Darwin, Australia 29th Annual Shell Fremantle Print Award, Fremantle Arts Centre, Australia 21th Telstra NATSIAA, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, Australia	2000	<i>Papunya Tula: Genesis and Genius</i> , Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia
2003	20th Telstra NATSIAA, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, Australia <i>Elizabeth Nyumi</i> , Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne, Australia	1999	16th Telstra NATSIAA, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, Australia
2002	<i>Elizabeth Nyumi</i> , Aboriginal and Pacific Art Gallery, Sydney, Australia 30th Alive Prize, Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs, Australia	1998	15th Telstra NATSIAA, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, Australia
2001	<i>Aborigena Arte, Australiana Contemporanea</i> , Palazzo Bricherasio, Italy 18th Telstra NATSIAA, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, Australia <i>Balgo Works</i> , Städtische Gallery, Wolfsburg, Germany Solo: <i>Parwalla</i> , Raft Artspace, Darwin, Australia	1997	14th Telstra NATSIAA, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, Australia <i>Dreamings: Aboriginal kunst uit Australie</i> , Eusebius, Arnhem, The Netherlands



This work is accompanied by a certificate of authenticity

Provenance

Warumpi Arts, NT Cat No. KAMNT 003/97

Kimberley Art, Victoria, Australia. Cat No. KA00517

Lawson~Menzies Important Aboriginal, Sydney, NSW, Australia. June 2009, Lot No. 183

Menzies Estate Collection, Victoria, Australia

Private collection, The Netherlands

About the work

Mick's paintings depict undulating landscapes appearing to oscillate and move with visual energy. The artist generates this effect by painting patterned backgrounds on which he meticulously adds tight, meandering lines composed of thousands of dots. These lines and switchbacks correspond to mythical stories of the Pintupi people and the formation of the desert in which they live. Tjapaltjarri paints abstract images of sacred stories and songs from his family's Dreaming. The stories focus around the Tingari, the ancestors of the Pintupi, spirit beings who are believed to have created all living things. His stories are about his country and sacred sites such as Marruwa and Kanapilya.

Mick Namarari was born at Marnpi, south west of Mount Rennie and was on the Papunya community council when Geoff Bardon arrived there to teach art in 1971. He was one of the first to express an interest in painting for Bardon shortly after his arrival and was a founding member of the Papunya Tula Artists cooperative the following year.



Mouse Story (Dreaming)

Synthetic polymer paint on Belgian linen
182.5 x 122 cm / 71,7 x 48 inch

Year: 1997

Price: \$ 35,000*

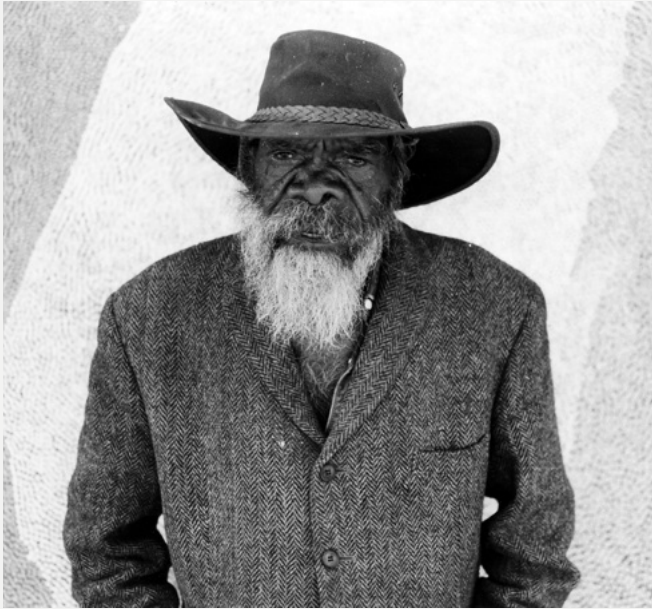


Image Courtesy Paul Sweeney

Mick Namarari Tjapaltjarri

Mick Namarari Tjapaltjarri was a renowned Australian Indigenous artist and one of the founders and great contributors of the Western Desert Art movement. Born in Marnpi, Northern Territory, Tjapaltjarri belonged to the Pintupi people, one of the last Indigenous groups to make contact with non-Indigenous Australians. His upbringing was steeped in the rich traditions and stories of his culture, which profoundly influenced his later artistic work.

Tjapaltjarri's artistic journey began in earnest during the early 1970s when he joined the Papunya Tula Artists, a cooperative that played a pivotal role in the establishment of contemporary Indigenous Australian art. This group of artists, led by Geoffrey Bardon, sought to share their culture and stories through visual art, using acrylic paint on canvas, a medium that would become synonymous with Western Desert art.

Mick Tjapaltjarri's work is distinguished by its meticulous attention to detail and his ability to convey the intricate narratives of his culture through abstract forms and symbolism. His paintings often depict Dreamtime stories—ancestral tales that explain the origins and laws of the land and its people. These stories are encoded in complex patterns and dots, a style that Tjapaltjarri mastered and helped popularize.

Throughout his career, Tjapaltjarri's art evolved, reflecting both his deepening understanding of the medium and his desire to innovate. His early works were characterized by their bold, vibrant colors and dense dotting technique. In contrast, his later pieces often featured more minimalistic and subtle color palettes, emphasizing the geometric patterns and spiritual significance of the depicted stories.

His contributions to art were recognized with numerous awards and exhibitions. In 1991, he received the prestigious Alice Prize, and in 1994, he was awarded the Australia Council's Red Ochre Award for his lifetime achievements and impact on Indigenous art. His works have been exhibited in major galleries and museums around the world, including the National Gallery of Australia and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Sydney.

Beyond his artistic achievements, Tjapaltjarri was a respected elder and leader in his community. He dedicated much of his life to preserving and promoting his culture, ensuring that future generations could continue to learn and appreciate the stories and traditions of the Pintupi people.

Mick Namarari Tjapaltjarri passed away in 1998, leaving behind a rich legacy that continues to inspire and influence the world of art. His work not only celebrates the beauty and complexity of Indigenous Australian culture but also serves as a powerful reminder of the enduring connection between people and their ancestral lands.

"paint slow, no rush, slow."

Selected Collections

National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, Australia
 National Museum of Australia, Canberra, Australia
 National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia
 Geelong Gallery, Geelong, Australia
 Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia
 Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, Australia
 Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, USA
 Seattle Art Museum, Seattle, USA
 Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS), Canberra, Australia
 Araluen Art Centre, Alice Springs, Australia
 Allen, Allen & Hemsley, Sydney, Australia
 Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, Australia
 Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, Australia
 Art Bank, Sydney, Australia
 Australian Museum, Sydney, Australia
 Chartwell Collection, New Zealand
 Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide, Australia
 The Kelton Foundation, Santa Monica, USA
 Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, Australia
 South Australian Museum, Adelaide, Australia
 Supreme Court, Darwin, Australia
 Janet Holmes a'Court Collection Australia
 Berndt Museum, University of Western Australia, Perth, Australia
 Wollongong City Art Gallery, Wollongong, Australia
 Hood Museum of Art, New Hampshire, USA

Selected Literature

O'Halloran A., *The master from Marnpi: Mick Namarari Tjapaltjarri*, LifeDesign Australia, 2018

Selected Exhibitions

2024	<i>Mysteries that Remain</i> , Cummer Museum of Art and Gardens, Jacksonville, USA	1993/94	<i>Aratjara: Art of the First Australians</i> , Traveling exhibition through Europe
2019/20	<i>Am Anfang War Das Land</i> , Sammlung Klein, Germany	1993	H 'Mick Namarari & Maxie Tjampitjinpa', Utopia Art Sydney
2014	<i>Tradition Today: Indigenous Art in Australia</i> , Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia	1992	<i>Crossroads-Towards a New Reality: Aboriginal Art from Australia</i> , Traveling exhibition through Japan
2012	<i>Unique Perspectives: Papunya Tula Artists and the Alice Springs Community</i> , Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs, Australia	1991	National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, Australia <i>The Painted Dream</i> , Auckland City Art Gallery, N.Z. and National Art Gallery and Museum, Wellington, Australia
2011/12	<i>Tjukurrjtjanu: Origins of Western Desert Art</i> , National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia; Musée du quai Branly, Paris, France	1990	<i>L'été australien à Montpellier: 100 chefs-d'œuvre de la peinture australienne</i> , Musee Farbre, Galerie St. Ravy, Montpellier, France Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi at Palazzo Bianchi Michiel' Venice, Italy <i>The Last Show 1990</i> , Utopia Art Sydney, Australia
2010	<i>Desert Country</i> , Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, Australia	1998	<i>Dreamings: The Art of Aboriginal Australia</i> , Asia Society Galleries, New York, USA
2009	<i>Icons of the Desert: Early Aboriginal Paintings from Papunya</i> , Fowler Museum, UCLA, Los Angeles, USA	1989	<i>Mythsapes</i> , National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia
2007	<i>Papunya Painting: Out of the Australian Desert</i> , Hood Museum of Art, Hanover, Germany	1988	<i>Ageless Art</i> , Queensland Museum, Brisbane, Australia
2004	<i>Crossing Country: The Alchemy of Western Arnhem Land Art</i> , Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia	1986	<i>Desert Artists</i> , Sydney Opera House Exhibition Hall, Sydney, Australia
2002	<i>Desert Painters of Australia</i> , National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia	1985	<i>The Face of the Centre: Papunya Tula Paintings 1971-1984</i> , National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia
2001	<i>Dreamtime: the Dark and the Light</i> , Kunst der Gegenwart, Sammlung Essl, Vienna	1981	<i>Aboriginal Australia</i> National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, Australia
2000	<i>Papunya Tula: Genesis and Genius</i> , Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia <i>12th Biennale of Sydney</i> , Art Gallery of New South Wales; Muuseum of Contemporary Art; Artspace, Object Galleries; Customs House; Government House; Sydney Opera House; Sydney Film Festival; City of Sydney		
1998	<i>Miny'tji Buku-Larrnggay Mulka</i> , National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, Australia		
1994	National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, Australia		



Water and Tucker

Synthetic polymer paint on composition board
76 x 91 cm / 29.9 x 35.8 inch

Year: 1972

Price: POA

This work is accompanied by a certificate of authenticity

Provenance

Painted at Papunya, Australia in 1972
Stuart Art Centre, Alice Springs, Australia
Private Collection, Vancouver, Canada
Sotheby's, Aboriginal Art, Melbourne, Australia. 25-07-2005, lot 158
The Austcorp Group Limited Art Collection, Australia
Private collection, The Netherlands

Exhibited

Tjukurtjanu; Origins of Western Desert Art, Musée du quai Branly, Paris, France, 2012-2013
Tjukurtjanu; Origins of Western Desert Art, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia, 2011-2012
Selections from the Austcorp Group Limited Collection of Aboriginal Art, New Australian Art exhibition series, The Deloitte Foundation, Sydney, Australia 2007

Literature

Benjamin, R., Weislogel, A. C., *Icons of The Desert: Early Aboriginal Paintings from Papunya*, Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University, New York, 2009, p.21, illustrated in the background of a photograph of the Men's Painting Room at Papunya taken in 1972

Bardon, G., Bardon, J., *Papunya, A Place Made After the Story: The Beginnings of the Western Desert Painting Movement*, Melbourne: The Miegunyah Press, 2004, p.429, painting 394

Ryan, J., Batty, P., *Tjukurtjanu: Origins of Western Desert Art*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne: Council of Trustees of the National Gallery of Victoria, 2011, p.274

About the work

In the first three years of the Papunya art movement, Johnny Warangkula produced a series of paintings of the desert landscape covered in native food plants and nourished by rain and rivers of freshwater. In mid-1972, at the time this work was created, a major topic of discussion amongst the artists in the Painting Room at Papunya was the idea of painting 'my country', that for most of the artists was quite distant from the township. These works are characterized by fields of intricate brushwork, where every section of the composition is meticulously detailed in layers of dotted and stippled paint.

Among the artist's finest works, these paintings capture the essence of the physical richness and variety of vegetation and topographical features in the landscape at a dramatic time in the seasonal cycle. Moreover, through the visually mesmerizing application of layers of color, the artist conveys the notion of the ancestral forces vivifying the landscape. This composition is an elaboration on the conventional desert iconography for Rain or Water Dreamings: two sets of concentric circles, representing fresh waterholes, joined by a series of meandering lines to represent flowing water. The footprints of the Water Ancestor appear in the lower left quadrant while the black area in the lower right represents a clay pan.



Johnny Warangkula Tjupurrula

Johnny Warangkula Tjupurrula was born in Mintjilpirri, south of Lake Mackay around 1918. He was one of the Pintupi people and he spoke the Western Desert language. Johnny first encountered white civilisation in 1930 when he hid in a tree upon seeing a plane, which he understood to be a devil. In 1932 he met an Adelaide University expedition at Mt. Liebig and afterwards, his family moved to Hermannsburg, where Johnny worked as a laborer constructing the airstrip. He continued working in construction. Before the bulk of the Haasts Bluff population was moved to Papunya in 1960, where Johnny was chosen, along with Nosepeg Tjupurrula, as a Australian First Nations representative to meet Queen Elizabeth II.

In 1971 Warangkula was involved in the painting of the famous Honey Ant murals on a school at Papunya. This was the beginning of the Australian First Nations Art movement in general and consequently also of Johnny Warangkula's painting career. Johnny acquired painting material and soon developed his own personal style. He was the first to use the dotting technique to describe vegetation, often applying several layers of 'overdotting'. From the very beginning at Papunya, Johnny has always adhered to the idea that his paintings are stories - Australian Indigenous stories.

He has never allowed any infiltration of European influence and rarely uses literal depictions of objects. Geoffrey Bardon advised the 'painting mob', of which Johnny was an important member, to paint in an Indigenous way using Australian Indigenous signs and symbols that one might have found in body paint, tjuringa or sand paintings. Because of this 'purity' his works retain an integrity which places them amongst the most significant productions from the seminal art site that was Papunya.

Johnny remained an important force in the painting movement until the mid 1980s, when his failing eyesight reduced his artistic output. His work often depicted Water Dreaming stories, as well as Yam, Fire, Dingo, Wallaby and Egret. Many of his paintings stand out from work by other Australian First Nations artists, in the way they present the transitory beauty of water and its transformative effect on the landscapes represented in his works.

In early 1997, Michael Hollow, a well known Australian artist himself, made a great effort to revive Johnny's painting career and commissioned him to do a series of small works. This series started a new phase in Johnny's distinguished painting career. In the following years he developed this direction. The series, perhaps his final one due to failing health, includes a range of small to very large dynamic, powerful paintings in pure red, blacks with white, yellow and ochre highlights. Each of the works features the established imagery of Johnny's Dreamings overpainted to hide the secret and sacred elements. These works evolved slowly over an eighteen month period, during which time the artist displayed once more his mastery of this unique form of art and storytelling. These late works were made despite his failing eyesight and poor health.

Johnny Warangkula Tjupurrula's works are in all major museum collections in Australia and sought after by many international collectors.

Johnny Warangkula Tjupurrula passed away in 2001.

Selected Collections

The Holmes à Court Collection, Australia
 National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia
 Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, Australia
 National Museum of Australia, Canberra, Australia
 Orange Regional Gallery, Orange, Australia
 Alice Springs Local Courts, Alice Springs, Australia
 Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, Australia
 Flinders University Museum of Art, Adelaide, Australia
 Hank Ebes Collection, Melbourne, Australia
 South Australian Museum, Adelaide, Australia
 Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia
 Central Collection, Australian National University, Canberra, Australia
 Department of Archaeology and Anthropology, Australian National University, Canberra, Australia
 Donald Kahn Collection
 Lowe Art Museum, University of Miami, Miami, USA
 Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, Australia
 The Kelton Foundation, Santa Monica, USA
 The Collection of Colin and Elizabeth Laverty, Sydney, Australia

Selected Exhibitions

- 2023 *Dreaming with your Eyes Open*, SmithDavidson Gallery, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
- 2022 *Irrititja Kuwarri Tjungu | Past & Present Together: 50 Years of Papunya Tula Artists, Part 2*, Kluge-Ruhe Collection, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, USA
Origins, SmithDavidson Gallery, New York, USA
- 2021 *Lineage & Legacy*, Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs, Australia
Aboriginalities, Koninklijke Musea voor Schone Kunsten, Brussels, Belgium
Papunya 50 Years, 1971 - 2021, SmithDavidson Gallery, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
- 2015 *Signs and Traces. Contemporary Aboriginal Art*, Zamek Culture Centre, Poznan, Poland
- 2012/13 *Tjukkurtjanu; Origins of Western Desert Art*, Musée du quai Branly, Paris, France
- 2011 *Tjukkurtjanu; Origins of Western Desert Art*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia
- 2010 *Desert Country*, Art Gallery of South Australia, Australia
- 2001 *Icons of Australian Aboriginal Art*, Singapore
- 1999 Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, USA
Tjinytjilpa, Embassy of Australia, Washington, USA
 Flinders Art Museum Flinders University, Adelaide, Australia
- 1993 Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, Australia
- 1991 Lowe Art Museum, University of Miami, Miami, USA
- 1989 Australian National Gallery, Canberra, Australia
 Westpac Gallery, Melbourne, Australia
Mythscales, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia
- 1988 Wagga Wagga City Art Gallery, Wagga Wagga, Australia
- 1982 London, England
 Brisbane Festival, Brisbane, Australia
 George Paton Gallery, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia
- 1981 National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia



Johnny Warangkula Tjupurrula in Men's Painting Room, Papunya, 1972





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The Armory Show, September 5 - 8

Booth #411

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