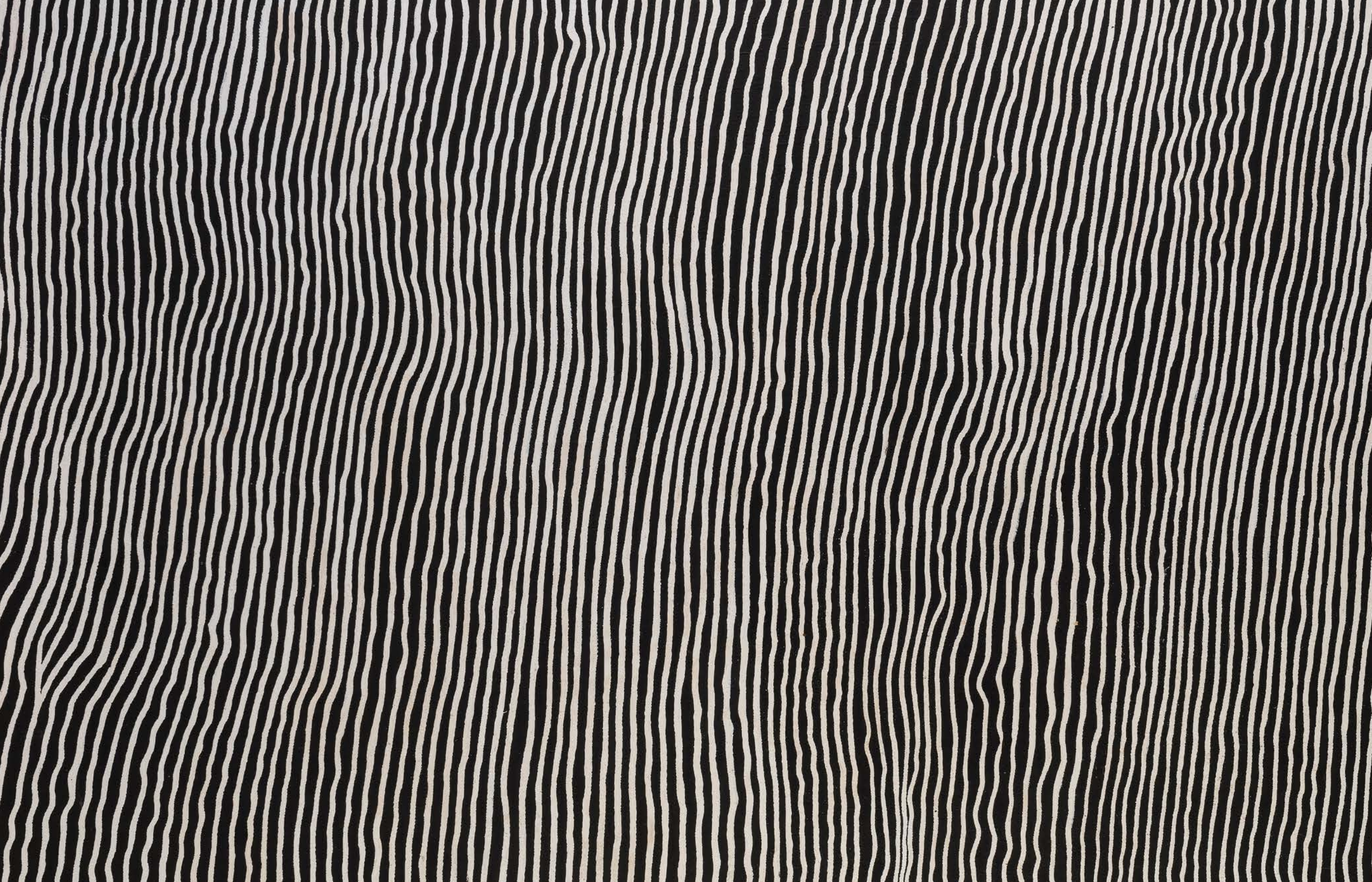




# SIGNIFICANT

PART TWO



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—  
First Nation viewers are advised  
that this catalogue contains images  
of deceased persons.

—  
Cover: GINGER RILEY  
MUNDUWALAWALA  
*Limmen Bight Country* 1990 (detail)

Previous: KANYA TJAPANGATI  
*Untitled – Yaltintjanya* 2001 (detail)

# SIGNIFICANT

PART TWO

2 JUNE — 22 JULY 2023





## *Foreword*

Following Part One of *Significant* 2023, Part Two holds the keys to the movement's next progression. This star-studded lineup has been handpicked through focused connoisseurship and reflects its intrinsic qualities in artistic authorship and provenance.

We start with our cover work, Ginger Riley Munduwalawala's epic story of *Limmen Bight Country* 1990. This early work has all the grit and fierce determination expected in the artist's finest works from this earlier period. The painting also appeared in the artist's first solo show at William Mora Galleries in 1990 and represents a dramatic shift in the market expectation of what Aboriginal art is or was expected to be.

Among the other highlights we are honoured to represent are major works by leading artists Rover Thomas, Mick Namarari, Turkey Tolson, Doreen Reid, Naata Nungurrayi, Makinti Napanangka, Paddy Bedford and John Mawurndjul. Along with unexpectedly striking contemporary works by Jakayu Biljabu and Carlene West. All of these stand among the most outstanding international contemporary practitioners.

Darby Jampijinpa's monumental *Ngapakurlangu Jukurpa* 1989 is a masterwork of institutional proportion and quality. It is, without question, the influential leader's most significant painting to appear on the market to date. The work is illustrated with the artist on the front cover of the book *Darby Jampijinpa Ross: Make it Good for the People* by Simon Wright.

And there would be no sale without the inclusion of Emily. We are honoured to represent Emily Kame Kngwarreye's famous painting *Alhalkere – My Country* 1992. Previously owned by Ann Lewis AO when she was an International Council Member of MoMA, this painting has been extensively exhibited at the Queensland Art Gallery and further in the National Museum of Australia's travelling exhibition, which went to Japan. This painting has also been earmarked for inclusion in the forthcoming and highly anticipated retrospective exhibition at the National Gallery of Australia.

We look forward to personally welcoming you to our forthcoming exhibition of this most exciting art movement – *Significant*. If you can make it to the opening preview and exhibition, Diane, Vanessa, Chloe, Anne and myself look forward to welcoming you.

**D'LAN DAVIDSON**

DIRECTOR, D'LAN CONTEMPORARY



**GINGER RILEY  
MUNDUWALAWALA**

circa 1936 – 2002  
Marra language group

*Limmen Bight Country*

1990  
synthetic polymer paint  
on cotton duck  
100 × 149 cm

**PROVENANCE**

Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne,  
cat. no. AK468  
William Mora, Melbourne  
Collection of Ian W. Hicks AO,  
Melbourne

**EXHIBITED**

*Ginger Riley Munduwalawala –  
Limmen Bight Country: Works  
on Canvas, Paper and Board*,  
William Mora Galleries, Melbourne,  
20 October – 17 November 1990

AUD 45,000

GINGER RILEY MUNDUWALAWALA is a saltwater man. He comes from the coastal country of the Mara people, which is lapped by the sea of the Gulf of Carpentaria in south-eastern Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory. He was born on a hill called Yuluru near Limmen Bight River, where the powerful snake ancestor and creator Garimala lives. Central to Ginger Riley's art and spiritual vision is the river and the Four Arches of his mother's Country, a formation of four pyramidal hills that rise about 45 kilometres from the Gulf of Carpentaria.

As a young stockman, Ginger Riley encountered Western Aranda watercolourist Albert Namatjira and was inspired to capture his Country's colours and become an artist. Although surrounded by an already established art practice – creating artefacts and bark painting – Riley felt that the ochres available should only be used in ceremony and did not reflect the colour and light of his artistic imagination. His first chance to realise his vision was a printmaking workshop held in Ngukurr in 1986. Sequestering the screen-printing inks blue, green, pink, red and purple, he applied them directly to the cotton fabric with a brush, forming

different animals such as sharks, crabs, snakes and emus. The texture of these early watercolour-like paintings, created by the stippling effect of his brushstrokes, is a defining feature of his early acrylic paintings on Arches watercolour paper and canvas.

The painting *Limmen Bight Country* 1990 was presented in the artist's first solo exhibition, *Ginger Riley Munduwalawala – Limmen Bight Country: Works on Canvas, Paper and Board*, held at William Mora Galleries, Melbourne, in 1990. The painting is pared down in colour and characteristic of much of the works that Ginger Riley painted at Borroloola in 1990–1991. It features the two main protagonists of his oeuvre – Garimala, the ancestral king brown snake, and the guardian Ngak Ngak, the white-breasted sea eagle, depicted in profile facing the left. The two figures, especially Ngak Ngak, would frequently appear as means of honouring the creative spirits of Ginger Riley's mother's Country.

**VANESSA MERLINO**

—  
Reference: Judith Ryan, *Ginger Riley*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 1997.

**ROVER THOMAS JOOLAMA**

circa 1926 – 1998  
Wangkajunga/Kukatja language group

*Guwaliwali Country*

1989  
natural earth pigment  
and gum on canvas  
70 × 110 cm

**PROVENANCE**

Painted at Warmun, 1989  
Waringarri Aboriginal Arts, Western  
Australia, cat. nos AP1972 and S1989  
Deutscher Gertrude Street, Melbourne  
Private Collection, Melbourne

**EXHIBITED**

*Turkey Creek: Recent Work*,  
Deutscher Gertrude Street,  
Melbourne, 25 October –  
17 November 1989, cat. no. 5

**LITERATURE**

J. Smoker et al., *Turkey Creek,  
Recent Work*, exhibition catalogue,  
Deutscher Gertrude Street,  
Melbourne, 1989, p. 5 (illus.)

AUD 180,000

A cosmological oracle and compelling historian, ROVER THOMAS JOOLAMA maintains his legacy as a beloved figure in the landscape of Australian art. Born at Yalta, a soakage site near Kunawarritji (Well 33) on the Canning Stock Route in the Great Sandy Desert of Western Australia, Rover was picked up by a drover and taken north to Billiluna and the Kimberley after the death of his parents. Living in Warmun, or Turkey Creek, from age ten, he belonged to the Joolama subsection or skin group and came to adulthood in the traditional knowledge. It was in his East Kimberley home that Rover became one of Australia's most significant artists and an influential leader in ceremonial life, being most well known as the dreamer of the Kurirr-Kurirr ceremony, a dance cycle given to him by an apparition of his classificatory mother after she had been killed in a motor vehicle accident. The public performance of the cycle was pivotal in developing Rover Thomas's oeuvre as he consulted with his classificatory uncle, ritual leader and artist Paddy Jaminji, in Paddy's creation of painted boards illustrating historical and contemporary events witnessed by the spirit of the woman in her travels.

Rover commenced painting himself in 1982, three years after the creation of the Kurirr-Kurirr, and by the mid 1980s, had produced an arresting body of work, including a series of

paintings that concerned the killings of Aboriginal people from the early settlement times of the Kimberley. While reflecting aspects of Kimberley rock art and ceremonial body paint, Rover Thomas's rare approach and vision were unlike that of any of his contemporaries. Layers of thick traditional pigment and charcoal affixed with bush gum and resin binders gave the spiritual and physical representation of the sites and landscapes an unparalleled textural quality. The bold depiction of his subjects, outlined with white clay dotting, was an innovative design invention that influenced what was to become the style recognised as the Turkey Creek or Warmun School of painting.

From 1987 until he died in 1998, Rover Thomas was consistently represented in exhibitions nationwide. In 1990, he represented Australia as one of the first two Aboriginal artists at the 44th Biennale di Venezia. His solo exhibition *Roads Cross*, at the National Gallery of Australia in 1994, celebrated his extraordinary life and was a tribute to his gift to Australian art.

**VANESSA MERLINO**

—  
Reference: Belinda Carrigan (ed.) *Rover Thomas: I Want to Paint*, Heytesbury Pty Ltd, 2003.

**DARBY JAMPIJINPA ROSS**

1905–2005

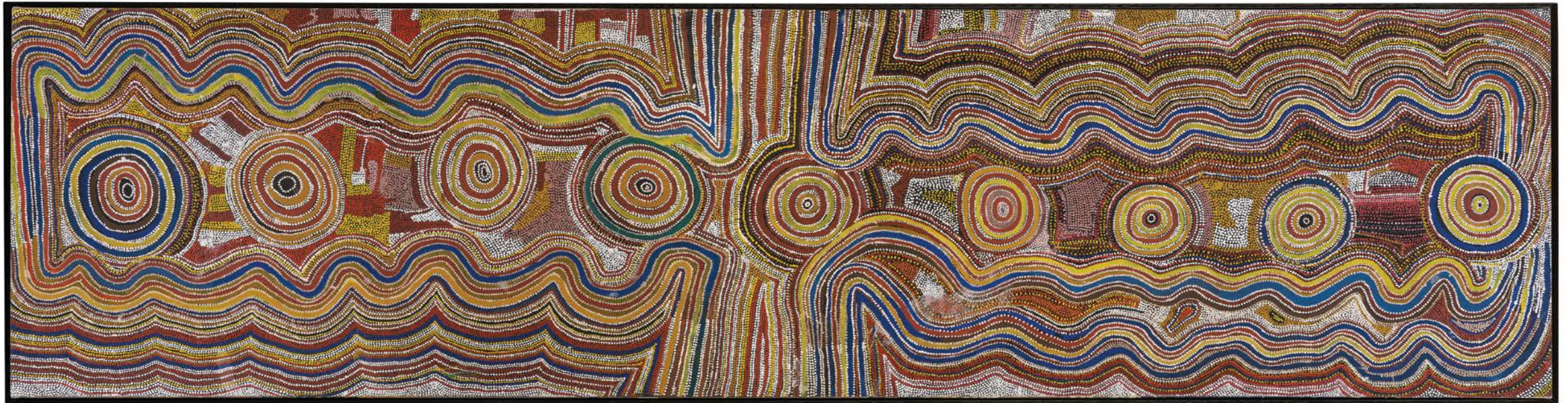
Warlpiri language group

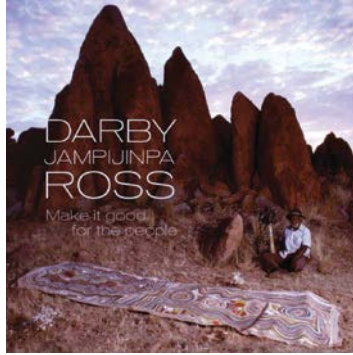
*Ngapakurlangu Jukurpa  
(Rain/Water Dreaming)*

1989

synthetic polymer paint on linen  
92 × 366 cm**PROVENANCE**Warlukurlangu Artists, Northern  
Territory, cat. no. 69/89Private Collection, Melbourne,  
acquired from the above in 1990**EXHIBITED***Aboriginal Art and Spirituality*,  
High Court of Australia, Canberra;  
Parliament House, Canberra; The  
Exhibitions Gallery, The Waverley  
Centre, Wheelers Hill; The Ballarat  
Fine Art Gallery, Ballarat; 1991*Darby Jampijinpa Ross: Make it  
Good for the People*, DELL Gallery,  
Queensland College of Art, Griffith  
University, Brisbane, 23 August  
– 28 September 2008; Araluen  
Centre for the Arts, Alice Springs,  
November 2008 – January 2009**LITERATURE**Rosemary Crumlin and Anthony  
Knight, *Aboriginal Art and Spirituality*,  
Collins Dove, North Blackburn,  
Victoria, 1991, pp. 66–67  
Simon Wright (ed.), *Darby Jampijinpa  
Ross: Make it Good for the People*,  
Griffith Artworks and University,  
Queensland, 2008, cover (illus.)

AUD 120,000





Catalogue cover, *Darby Jampijinpa Ross: Make it Good for the People*, Griffith Artworks and University, Queensland, 2008

The monumental painting *Ngapakurlangu Jukurrpa (Rain/Water Dreaming)* 1989 by esteemed Warlpiri Elder DARBY JAMPINJINPA ROSS has become an iconic image for one of the foremost painters in the history of Warlukurlangu Artists. The vast scope of the Rain/Water Dreaming belonging to the Jampijinpa/Jangala subsection is the artist's most significant and largest known work. It was not publicly exhibited until the first retrospective and first solo of Jampijinpa's work, which was presented posthumously three years after his death at one hundred years of age. The exhibition *Darby Jampijinpa Ross: Make it Good for the People*, curated by Simon Wright, was held at DELL Gallery, Griffith University, in Brisbane in 2008. Famously gracing its catalogue cover, the critically acclaimed painting *Ngapakurlangu Jukurrpa* makes for a stunning image – overseen by its seated creator Darby Jampijinpa Ross, it lies unstretched upon the coarse desert floor, connecting the topographical immensity with the vast narrative depicted on its surface.

The story tells of how ancestral men travelled to Pilkipilki and, as they did, many sites were created along the way. Each concentric circle in the painting represents one of these sites. From right to left, the journey starts at Warlura, east of Yuendumu, with the ancestors' footprints being filled with rainwater from a large cloud at Lapakura and Warlura, creating the rockholes at these sites.

The Dreaming goes on to Warankurlpu, a hill west of Yuendumu, and Yinjirriwarnu,

another rockhole, where the rain reaches flood proportions. The journey ends at Pilkipilki, where the Jampijinpa/Jangala ancestors' spirits entered the mulju (soakage), made by lightning. In the centre of the painting is Wilpirri, where the lightning hits a gum tree, creating a soakage that never dries up. From there, the journey goes on to Kuntiwarnu, another soakage, home of the Kirrkarlanji (whistling eagle) and Chinkiwarnu, a soakage near Mikanji, which was created as a blind cloud hit another tree. The following site is Jukajuka, a large rock formation that is said to have been left behind by the Kurdu Kurdu Mangkurdu (children of the Rain Dreaming, young clouds), who camped there one night.

Darby Jampijinpa Ross was a much respected Warlpiri Elder, rainmaker, and owner of many important sites. He was a founding member of Warlukurlangu Artists, which was established in 1985–1986. He developed a style as bold and influential as he himself was in his role as a cross-cultural communicator and educator, in which he undertook many activities that also occupied and drove his long life.

#### VANESSA MERLINO

—  
Reference: Simon Wright (ed.), *Darby Jampijinpa Ross: Make it Good for the People*, Griffith Artworks and University, Queensland, 2008.



**EMILY KAME KNGWARREYE**

circa 1910 – 1996  
Anmatyerr language group

*Alhalkere – My Country*

1992  
synthetic polymer paint on linen  
121.5 × 302.2 cm

**PROVENANCE**

Delmore Gallery, Northern Territory, cat. no. 92C086  
Ann Lewis AO, Sydney, acquired from the above  
The Le Pley Collection, Western Australia, acquired directly from the above in 2008

**EXHIBITED**

*Emily Kame Kngwarreye: Alhalkere – Paintings from Utopia*, Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, 20 February – 13 April 1998; Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 15 May – 19 June 1998; National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 8 September – 22 November 1998  
*Utopia: The Genius of Emily Kame Kngwarreye*, National Museum of Art, Osaka, Japan, 26 February – 13 April 2008; National Art Centre, Tokyo, Japan, 28 May – 28 July 2008; National Museum of Australia, Canberra, 22 August – 12 October 2008

**LITERATURE**

*Art + Australia*, vol. 34 no. 1, Spring 1996  
Neale, M. et al., *Emily Kame Kngwarreye: Alhalkere – Paintings from Utopia*, Macmillan, Melbourne, 1998, pp. 94–95 (illus.)  
Neale, M. (ed.), *Utopia: The Genius of Emily Kame Kngwarreye*, National Museum of Australia, Canberra, 2008, pp. 98–99 (illus.)  
AUD 1,650,000



No other First has captivated the local and international imagination like Anmatyerr artist EMILY KAME KNGWARREYE. Her short yet prolific late-stage career bore an extraordinary legacy within which she embodied her Country and its cosmology to push the possibilities of dot and line, and chart an evolution in individual mark-making and painting practice.

Within Emily's lush and vast oeuvre, a few especially significant works can be isolated to signify the birth of a new stylistic period prompted by a shift in the artist's relationship to painting. The lavishly dotted *Albalkere – My Country* 1992 was painted around the midpoint of Emily's career and is an important inclusion in the discourse surrounding her series. The painting is a bridging work that links Emily's early and later periods and is an exceptional example of the transformations that would emerge and propel the artist forward into the next successive phase.

From her first canvas in 1988, at seventy-eight years of age, Emily autonomously produced an independently derived, contemporary form of expression. Judith Ryan, former curator of Indigenous Art at the National Gallery of Victoria, remarked that Emily Kame Kngwarreye's 1989–1991 paintings were the 'greatest dot paintings

of our time'.<sup>1</sup> Ryan's comment directly references the formal development and refinement of the first two years of Kngwarreye's rapid and unprecedented career rise. This period encapsulates the promise of a remarkable artistic oeuvre. Emily had transformed the application of the dot in Indigenous Australian art and, in doing so, also formed the stylistic foundation that Kngwarreye herself would revolutionise and eventually dramatically depart from in her painting practice.

Emily continuously refined her style and technique, producing infinite variations of scale, density, colour mixes and tone in the paintings of the first two years. The finely dotted clouds of 1990–1992 were painted with small brushes that were single dipped in black, white, red and yellow pigments – often small dots of pure colour were applied within larger dots. In 1992, a radical change occurred as Emily began to streamline her processes to increase her production rate. The characteristic dots and simple linear structures of batik-making that dominated the surface in Emily's first few years of painting on canvas gave way to large fields of dots. The graphic underlayer of the yam tracks and the lines around the stretching edge disappeared, and the number of paint layers diminished. Larger brushes replaced the fine, concentrated application

Janet Holt and Emily Kame Kngwarreye at Delmore Downs, 1992, photo Steve Strike



on early canvases, and Emily began to improvise her technique by cutting down the hairs of the brush around the edges and leaving the central hairs long. By double dipping with the altered brushes, she produced 'florets' of colour as she brought the brush down on the canvas vertically, then lifted it with a twist.<sup>2</sup> By the end of 1992 and into 1993, Emily had commenced a significant period identified as the 'colourist phase',<sup>3</sup> which is characterised by a succession of intensely bright paintings, followed by contrastingly subtle ones, executed with a bouncing, dragging, paint-laden motion.

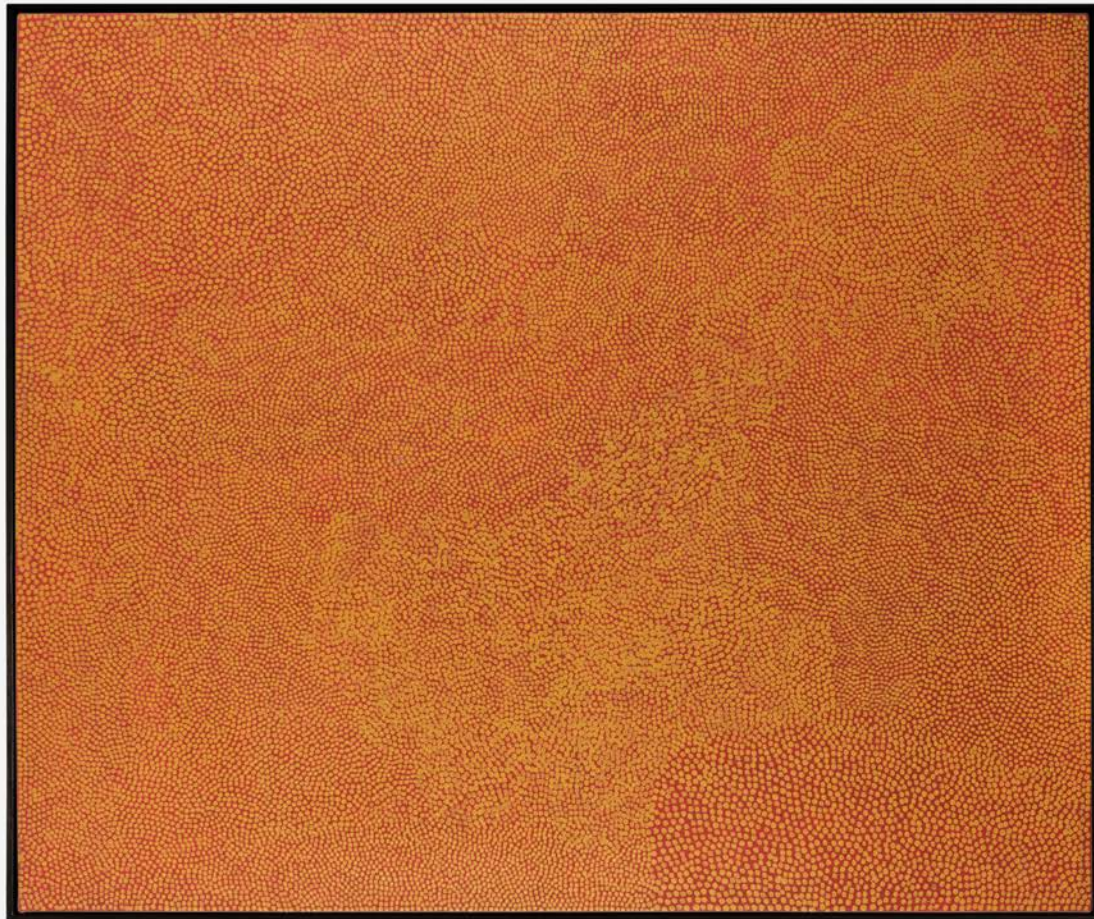
The painting *Albalkere – My Country* signifies a restive yet wholly realised moment between these phases. It holds some of the features of Emily's early paintings, such as the hallmark linear substrate representing yam root networks overlaid with dots, but with the intensity softened. The field of orchestrated dots is open and expansive, allowing for exploration between the layers. The force of the pressure in their application has left some of the centres of the dots void. In other places, the yam tracks are trailed in green/pink and pink/green sequences, creating a rich expression of warmth and colour. The white dots moving across the surface are met by the darker, shadowy areas on the opposite side of the canvas, which lead the eye into

the depths of the masterfully poised and balanced composition.

While Emily developed as an abstract painter uniquely and distinctively, she was also highly responsive to the interests, suggestions and tastes of those around her. Although the market pressure was quickly building around Emily during its production, Janet Holt recalls that Emily painted *Albalkere – My Country* at Delmore with only herself in mind, delighting in the freedom, joy and synchrony in the act of painting.<sup>4</sup> Although the force of family and market obligations can be recognised as accelerating rather than restraining her expression, such a painting is unique in its rarity in marking the tipping point of the irreversible turn in self-awareness.

#### VANESSA MERLINO

1. Judith Ryan, 'The beginning is my end', in Margo Neale (ed.), *Emily Kame Kngwarreye: Albalkere – Paintings from Utopia*, Queensland Art Gallery, Macmillan, 1998, p. 43.
2. Jennifer Isaacs, 'Anmatyerr Artist', in Emily Kame Kngwarreye and Jennifer Isaacs, *Emily Kngwarreye: Paintings*, Craftsman House, Sydney, 1998, p. 21.
3. Margo Neale, *Utopia: The Genius of Emily Kame Kngwarreye*, National Museum of Australia, Canberra, 2008, p. 115.
4. Janet Holt, in conversation with author, November 2022.

**MICK NAMARARI****TJAPALTJARRI**

1926–1998

Pintupi language group

*Untitled – Mouse Dreaming*

1997

synthetic polymer paint on linen

183 × 152 cm

**PROVENANCE**

Papunya Tula Artists, Northern Territory, cat. no. MN970733

David and Anita Angel, Darwin

Utopia Art Sydney, Sydney

The Le Pley Collection,

Western Australia

AUD 250,000

MICK NAMARARI TJAPALTJARRI is rightly revered as one of Papunya Tula's most accomplished artists. His late-career Tjunginpa works are among his finest, with the largest of those paintings (183 × 152 cm) eagerly sought by discerning collectors. This striking large-scale work, *Untitled – Mouse Dreaming*, from July 1997, was painted in Papunya Tula's storage shed at Walunguru (Kintore).

Men of the Tjapaltjarri/Tjungurrayi (father/son) subsections are custodians for the hill site Tjunginpa, north-west of Kintore, and Namarari's Mouse Dreaming paintings dominate his 1990s output. From 1990 to 1998 he completed fifty-five such works for Papunya Tula, with the majority (forty-three) of them painted in just two-and-a-half years, from early 1996 to late 1998, representing nearly 50 per cent of his total painting oeuvre.<sup>1</sup>

The tjunginpa (spinifex or hopping mouse, *Notomys alexis*) is a delicate creature with grey fur and a long tail. A nocturnal animal, it favours sandhill and spinifex country, and the all-over dotting in *Untitled – Mouse Dreaming* represents

the tiny indentations the mouse's footprints form in the desert sand as it scurries about in search of berries (kampurarrpa, or akajirri), and depicts the berries themselves.

Namarari's Mouse Dreaming compositions typically have neither a horizon nor a central focus. Namarari started at the edge of the canvas, working patch by patch around the canvas and towards the centre. Applying yellow dotting onto a red ground, he covered the entire canvas in a seemingly amorphous array. There are no identifiable objects or lines, nor is there any under-drawing. Namarari created variety and interest through variations in opacity, dot size and dotting density. Rarely do the dots touch each other. This required the brush tip to be carefully placed onto the canvas, lightly pressed, then lifted and moved slightly, to place the next dot, and so on. He would apply six to eight dots then reload the brush, flicking away any excess paint to avoid drips spoiling the canvas. His dotting necessitated close hand-eye coordination and mental patience.

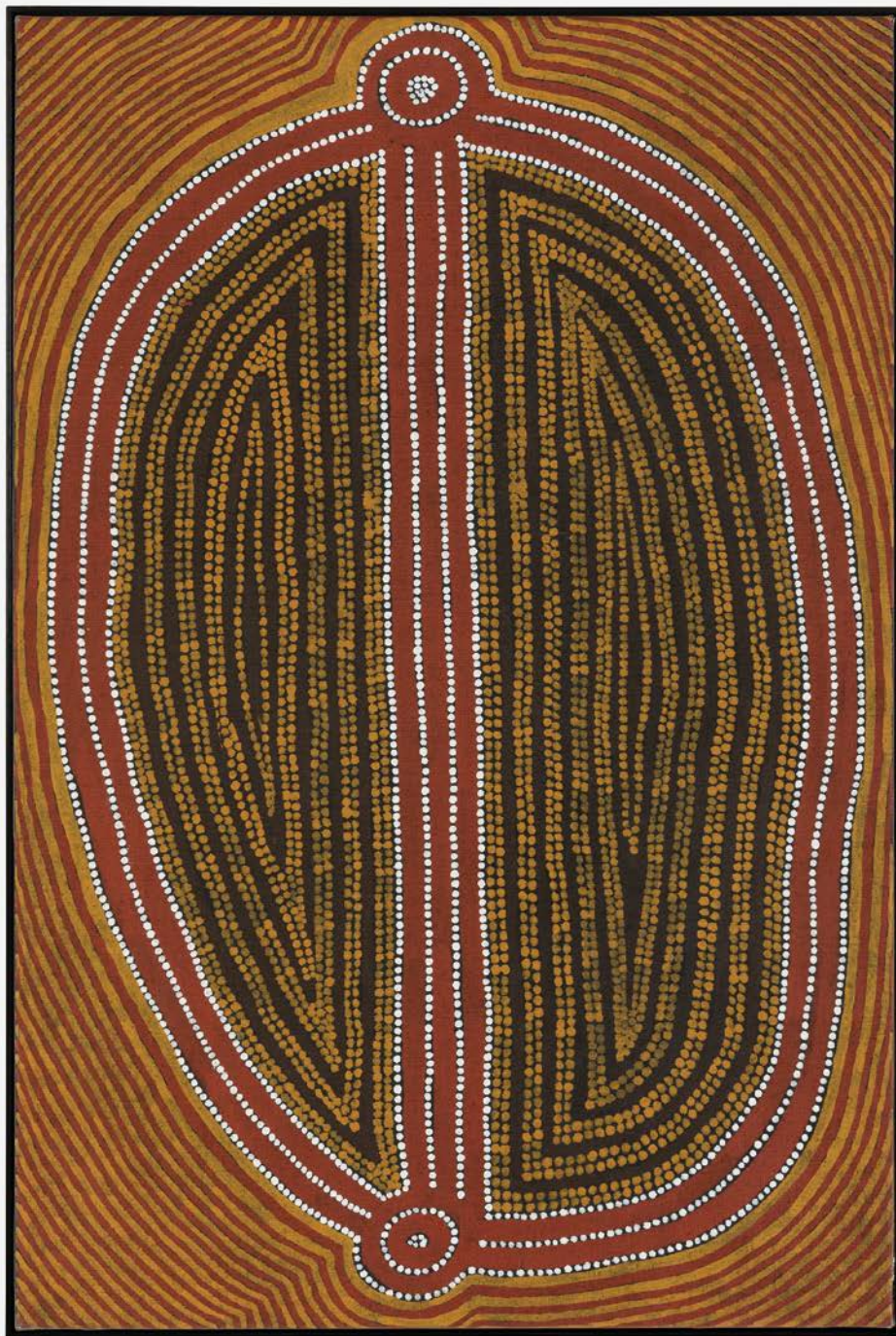
As a child, Namarari learned to read nature's innumerable signs, refining these skills into adulthood. As an artist, he took the opportunity to translate what he saw and understood into his paintings. Once settled by himself in the painting shed, Namarari was 'in the zone', immersed in his own world. When at work painting, he detested interruptions, preferring to paint alone, where he might sing quietly to himself.

The longer one sits with this painting, the calmer one becomes. Namarari completed this painting in virtual solitude, deep in concentration. Perhaps he yearned for peace and quiet, and in Papunya Tula's painting shed in the final year of his life he located the portal. His painting is an invitation to stillness.

#### ALEC O'HALLORAN

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1. Alec O'Halloran, *The Master from Marnpi: Mick Namarari Tjapaltjarri*, Life Design Australia, Sydney, 2018, p. 154.



**MICK NAMARARI****TJAPALTJARRI**

1926–1998

Pintupi language group

*Untitled – Kuningka*

1990

synthetic polymer paint on linen

76 × 51 cm

**PROVENANCE**

Papunya Tula Artists, Northern

Territory, cat. no. MN900745

Chapman Gallery, Canberra

Private Collection, Canberra

AUD 33,000

Namarari's *Untitled – Kuningka* painting from July 1990 relates to a small carnivorous marsupial, kuningka, or western quoll (*Dasyurus geoffroii*), a rare subject in Namarari's art. The kuningka, sometimes referred to as the 'native cat', has brown fur with conspicuous white dots and a bushy tail. Namarari described its habit as sleeping by day and leaving its burrow to go hunting at night.

This painting was created at Walungurru (Kintore), one of seven such works painted between 1985 and 1991, and affiliated with the sites of Pinkalnga, Marnpi, Yuwalki, Matingka and Pintjirralnga. Namarari's major 1989 commissioned work, *Two Kuningka Dreaming*, is in the National Gallery of Victoria collection.<sup>1</sup>

*Untitled – Kuningka* displays symmetry and rhythm. The two roundels depict the animal's home, with the adjoining lines representing the kuningka's

pathways and tracks; the alternating red and yellow lines surrounding them depict sandhills. These roundels and the connecting sets of broad brown stripes form a bold motif that is set against the dotted bands within and the narrow stripes without. The roundels and stripes are meticulously bordered with single lines of white dotting, serving to lift and brighten the composition. The peripheral sandhill lines run to the edges of the canvas, where Namarari has neatly finished (or started) each line with his steady hand. Namarari liked to control every part of his canvas: casual mark-making was not his interest.

**ALEC O'HALLORAN**

1. See Alec O'Halloran, *The Master from Marnpi: Mick Namarari Tjapaltjarri*, Life Design Australia, Sydney, 2018, p. 182 (illus.).

**TURKEY TOLSON****TJUPURRULA**

circa 1938 – 2001  
Pintupi language group

*Straightening the Spears*

1998  
synthetic polymer paint on linen  
153 × 183 cm

**PROVENANCE**

Papunya Tula Artists, Northern Territory, cat. no. TT980723  
The Le Pley Collection,  
Western Australia

AUD 96,000

From the early 1990s until his passing in August 2001, TURKEY TOLSON TJUPURRULA was one of the three pillars of the Papunya Tula Artists' (PTA) men's studio in Walungurru (Kintore). Along with Mick Namarari Tjapaltjarri and Ronnie Tjampitjinpa, Tjupurrula headed one of the most important and formidable periods in the history of PTA and the Western Desert art movement.

He acted as chairperson of Papunya Tula Artists and was gatekeeper for the sacred cave site of Mitukatjirri, and coach of the Yuwalki Blues, but most importantly, during this time Tjupurrula created a huge body of large-scale paintings that centred on his most celebrated site, that of the Mitukatjirri cave south of Walungurru. It was near this site, at Ilyingaungau, that the Mitukatjirri warriors gathered in anticipation of a conflict with their rivals from Tjikari further north. At Ilyingaungau the men prepared for battle and began shaping their mulyati (spears) by warming them over fire and bending them to ensure a true and accurate flight when hurled at their adversaries.

Mulyati are made from a variety of acacia that can be found on red sand plains, growing in large numbers among the spinifex. It's a tall, straight single-stemmed plant and, at around 2.5 metres high, is virtually a ready-made spear. The rows of dots in Tjupurrula's paintings are a direct representation of the subtle kinks and imperfections of the spears as they were heated and straightened over fire by the Mitukatjirri warriors.

On occasions Tjupurrula would even trace the outline of one of his own spears by laying it across the surface of the blank canvas and, with a pencil, following the profile of the spear from one side of the painting to the other. He would then gently and methodically dot along the pencil lines in yellow and red ochres as they gently meandered from one side to the other. The end result gave the appearance of an organic and naturally occurring line that mirrored that of a hand-shaped mulyati.

**PAUL SWEENEY**



**ELIZABETH NYUMI  
NUNGURRAYI**

1947–2019  
Pintupi language group

*Untitled – Parwalla*

1999  
synthetic polymer paint on linen  
180 × 120 cm

**PROVENANCE**

Warlayirti Artists, Western  
Australia, cat. no. 911-99  
Palya Art, Darwin  
Private Collection  
Annette Larkin, Sydney  
The Le Pley Collection,  
Western Australia

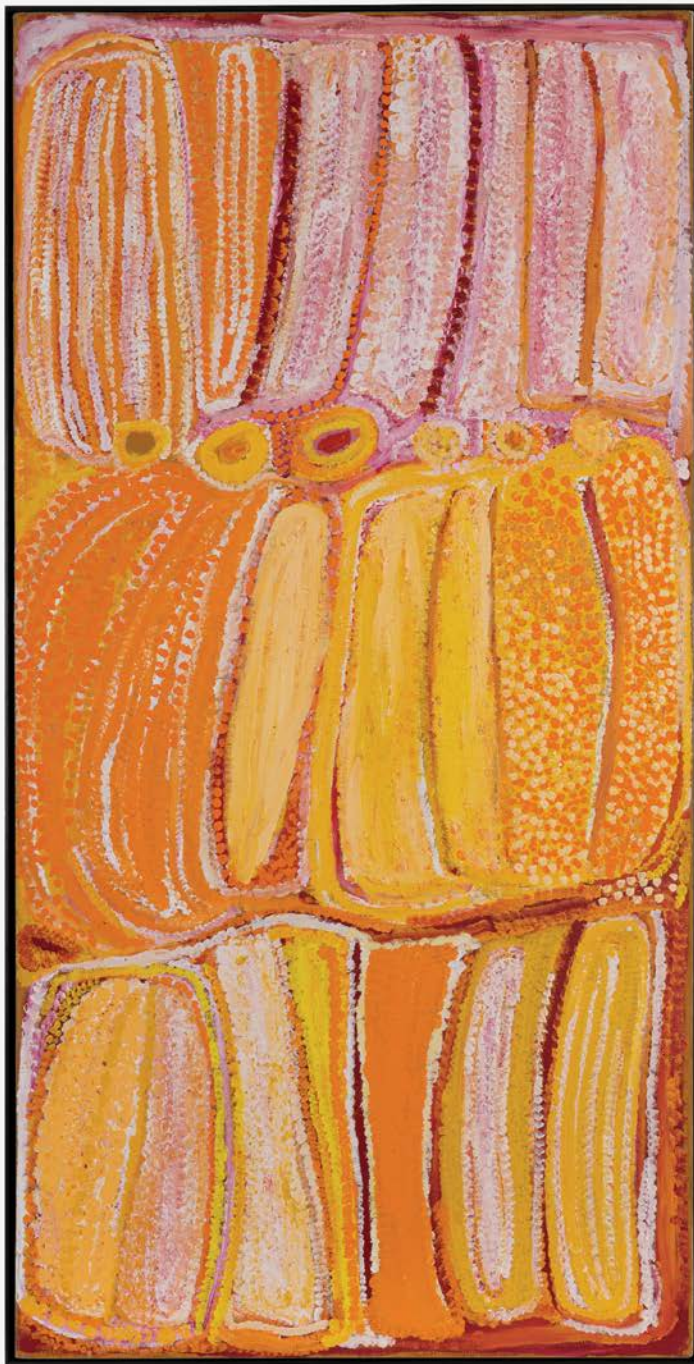
**EXHIBITIONS**

*Emotion & Reason*, Biennale  
of Sydney, Museum of  
Contemporary Art, Sydney, 2004

AUD 30,000

This painting depicts the Country of Elizabeth's birth and is known as Parwalla, located in the Great Sandy Desert. Various forms of the landscape and different foods in the area are shown here, represented as areas of smaller, usually green, dotting. People, the brown U shapes, with coolamons full of food are depicted, while the majority of the painting – and the landscape it depicts – is dominated by sand dunes, or tali. A wanna, or digging stick, may also be seen. The main types of bush food are minyali, a sweet berry, kantilli, a bush raisin, and lukarrar, a seed ground up for flour for making damper.

—  
Drawn from the Warlayirti Artists certificate.

**EUBENA NAMPITJIN**

1924–2013  
Kukatja/Wangkajunga language group

*Untitled – Mindiki Karn*  
2002

synthetic polymer paint on linen  
150 × 75 cm

**PROVENANCE**

Warlayirti Artists, Western  
Australia, cat. no. 131/02  
Scott Livesey Galleries, Melbourne  
Private Collection, Melbourne

AUD 24,000

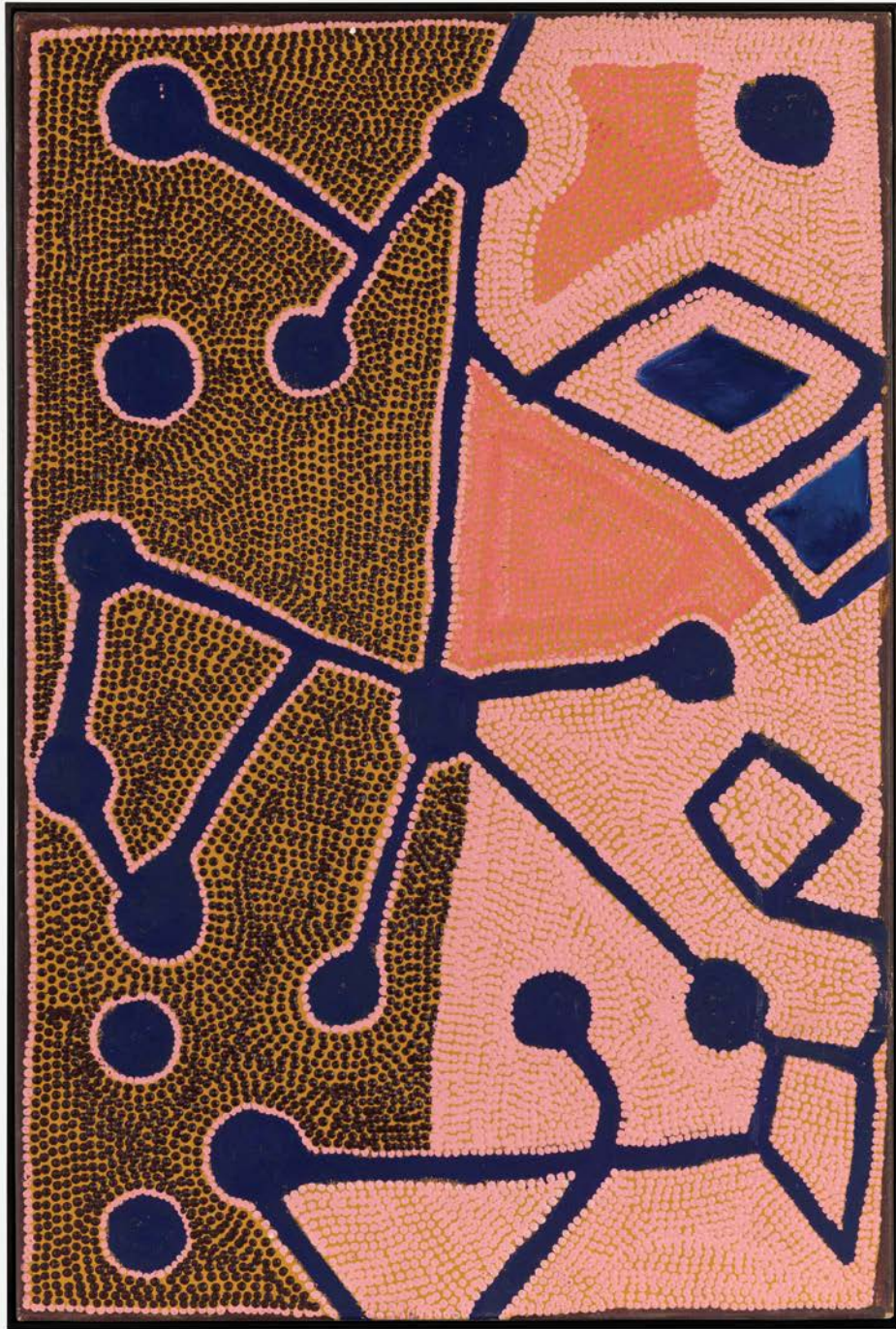
Eubena has painted some of her traditional Country, which is far to the south-west of Balgo. This is hilly country, east of Kunawarritji, called Mindiki Karn, along the middle and upper stretches of the Canning Stock Route. The majority of the painting shows the tali, or sand dunes, which dominate the landscape of the area. Kunawarritji is also known as Well 33, which is a vital water source that the people used as they travelled through this Country hunting.

Mindiki Karn is where Eubena's grandfather was injured by the horns of a bullock. He lay down at the site of these rockholes and died.

Eubena explains that they did not hurry him.

She remembers the grief of his older sister as she cried by the rockhole.

—  
Drawn from the Warlayirti Artists certificate.

**BOXER MILNER TJAMPITJIN**

circa 1935 – 2009

Walmajarri language group

*Kutupulwatu*

2001

synthetic polymer paint on linen  
75 × 50 cm

**PROVENANCE**

Warlayirti Artists, Western  
Australia, cat. no. 490/01  
The Collection of William and  
Lucy Mora, Melbourne  
*The Collection of William and  
Lucy Mora*, Fine Aboriginal  
Art, Deutscher and Hackett,  
Melbourne, 21 July 2010, lot 92  
Private Collection, Melbourne

AUD 12,000

Walya, the earth, is very dear to the Kutjungka people of the Kimberley region. And when relatives are painted up for ceremony, their bodies are revered also – the artists using a tender touch as they make marks on the ground and the skin. This tactile gentleness is found in Balgo paintings and resonates primarily within the work of artists such as BOXER MILNER TJAMPITJIN. Boxer painted with control, assurance and precision, and his two-handed method was an absolute expression of his patience and integrity. One of a few people who came from the transition zone between desert and river country, he expressed all the facets of his knowledge of the river systems of Purkitji (Sturt Creek) with a measured and deliberate hand.

Boxer's traditional lands are situated south-west of Billiluna. Here the Country and vegetation transform from flat plains of rolling spinifex to flood plains with vast river channels and permanent waterholes. *Kutupulwatu* 2001 shows Boxer's ingenuity in his use of abstract designs depicting

this place's myriad moods and seasons. Slowly mastering his artistic identity as a singular Balgo artist over two decades, Boxer Milner is considered one of the most inventive Australian First Nations artists, who produced the most distinctive paintings among his contemporaries.

*Kutupulwatu* is the name for some of Boxer's country, close to his home on the banks of Sturt Creek, north of Balgo. This painting shows a series of billabongs, or wakirr, as they are left by the receding waters after the rainy season. *Kutupulwatu* has two sorts of soil, a dark soil away from the creek, and a red soil closer to the main channel.

**VANESSA MERLINO**

—  
Drawn from the Warlayirti Artists certificate and John Carty, *Balgo: Creating Country*, UWA Publishing, Crawley, Western Australia, 2021.

**PADDY BEDFORD**

circa 1922 – 2007  
Gija language group

*Victory Hole*

1998  
natural earth pigments and  
synthetic binder on canvas  
122 × 135 cm

**PROVENANCE**

Jirrawun Arts, Kununurra, Western  
Australia, cat. no. PB 98.18  
William Mora Galleries, Melbourne  
Collection of Ian W. Hicks AO,  
Melbourne

**EXHIBITIONS**

*Paddy Bedford: My Country*,  
William Mora Galleries, Melbourne,  
18 November – 12 December 1998

AUD 100,000

PADDY BEDFORD's first solo show opened in Melbourne at William Mora Galleries on Wednesday, 18 November 1998. The exhibition titled *Paddy Bedford: My Country* presented eleven paintings depicting places from Paddy Bedford's mother's and father's Country. These early paintings are characterised by the rich red earth and ochre colours and deep black and bright white dotting that is unequivocally Kimberley in style and pallet.

The certificate reads:

This painting represents a Dreamtime story. People once travelled through the hill country (black upright shapes at the top of the work) down to where a white cockatoo was perched on top of another hill. The bird sang out to the travellers, preventing them from venturing further. The large black circle in the lower section depicts a waterhole.

Bedford was only picking up his brush when Rover Thomas, the father of East Kimberley art, passed away in 1998. Although older than Rover Thomas, Bedford was considered an emerging artist at age seventy-six. His intuition and ability were already evident in the first works he produced, only six months before this solo show. At this time, Paddy

Bedford was living and working at Crocodile Hole, a community in the East Kimberley where the newly formed Jirrawun Arts (meaning 'One') had been established. Paddy Bedford and other artists, such as Freddy Timms and Hector Jandany, owned and managed the new enterprise in an act of self-determination. With help from ex-Melbourne art gallerist Tony Oliver, as Jirrawun's artistic director, the group's vision was that the money made from painting would enable them to provide their small community with improved educational and health facilities, and the possibility of buying their land. Whether or not it could have been foreseen in these early days, Paddy Bedford's future success not only allowed him the economic freedom to provide for his family long after his passing in 2007, but his singular style of abstract balance and beauty changed the course of Australian art history. One such success was his groundbreaking retrospective at Sydney's Museum of Contemporary Art in 2006.

**VANESSA MERLINO**

—  
Reference: Linda Michael (ed.) *Paddy Bedford*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, 2006.



### JOHN MAWURNDJUL

Born 1952  
Kuninjku language group

*Mardayin at Dilebang*  
2006

natural earth pigments and synthetic  
binder on eucalyptus bark  
66 × 175 cm

### PROVENANCE

Maningrida Arts & Culture,  
cat. no. 3281-06  
William Mora Galleries, Melbourne  
Collection of Ian W. Hicks AO,  
Melbourne

AUD 120,000

One of the most recognisable First Nations Australian artists, JOHN MAWURNDJUL has been a conduit of spiritual, personal and creative evolution, which he channelled into his eminent artistic practice. The exceptional, transformative qualities of Mawurndjul's work have emerged from across the spiritual, material and conceptual terrain.

The first transformation is in the creative materials sourced in the Country around Maningrida where Mawurndjul lives and worked. The bark of the stringybark trees, which was cut to a larger and larger scale throughout his career, is cured over fire and flattened to make the base. Trunks of stringybark, ironwood or woollybutt are burned down to cooled, cracked chunks of charcoal and gathered for the black pigment. Red and yellow ochre are picked from the ground and powdered, but the white clay, the delek from Kudjarnngal, has the most transformative quality of all his materials. For it is the ingested bodies of spirits that Ngalyod – the rainbow serpent – excreted into the earth, to be found in brilliant white lumps. Mined by the artist's hand, this radiant white clay is the substance and first coat of Mawurndjul barks, shining through the spectacularly fine cross-hatching, or rarrk.

The rarrk, as Mawurndjul states, is representative of the spirit of Ngalyod. Though only one

component in the complex whole of the ancestral being, it is most fluid and malleable within Mawurndjul's expansive representations. As transformation is the critical feature of Ngalyod's essence, it is not surprising that the rarrk technique applied to capture the spirit drove his aesthetic revolutions towards abstraction.

Finally, the viewer's spirit is also transmuted in the presence of Mawurndjul's work. Expanded and transformed, the explorations of the Mardayin designs innate in Ngalyod's spirit occupy the late period of works, such as in *Mardayin at Dilebang* 2006. At this point, the secret design elements have been liberated, hitting a resonance that reverberates in the chests of the 'open' or uninitiated audience. The rarrk is the principal vehicle for engagement. To stand in front of a John Mawurndjul painting is to experience a visceral response to power, self-confidence, creative belief and higher knowledge. One cannot help but be altered, in a recognition that flows from one spirit to another.

### VANESSA MERLINO

—  
Reference: Luke Taylor, 'John Mawurndjul' in *Painting the Spirit*, D'LAN Contemporary, 2022.

**OWEN YALANDJA**

Born 1962  
Kuninjku language group

*Yawkyawk*

2010  
synthetic polymer paint  
on carved wood  
177 × 13 cm

**PROVENANCE**

Maningrida Arts & Culture, Northern  
Territory, cat. no. 5831-10  
Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne  
The Pizzi Collection, Melbourne  
Private Collection, Melbourne

AUD 22,000

Yawkyawk is a word in the Kunwinjku/Kunwok language of Western Arnhem Land meaning 'young woman' and 'young woman spirit being'. The different groups of Kunwinjku people (one of the Eastern dialect groups call themselves Kuninjku) each have Yawkyawk mythologies, which relate to specific locations in clan estates. These mythologies are represented in bark paintings and sculptures of Yawkyawk beings. There are also a few examples of rock art images of these beings.

The female water spirits Yawkyawk or Ngalkunburriyaymi are perhaps the most enigmatic of mythological themes. Sometimes compared to the European notion of mermaids, they exist as spiritual beings living in freshwater streams and rock pools, particularly those in the stone country. The spirit Yawkyawk is usually described and depicted with the tail of a fish. Thus the Kuninjku people sometimes call them ngalberddjenj which literally means 'the young woman who has a tail like a fish'. They have long hair, which is associated with trailing blooms of green algae (called man-bak in Kuninjku). At times they leave their aquatic homes to walk about on dry land, particularly at night.

Aboriginal people believe that in the beginning most animals were humans. During the time of the creation of landscapes and plants and animals, these ancestral heroes in human form transmuted into their animal forms via a series of various significant events now recorded as oral mythologies.

The creation ancestor Yawkyawk travelled the country in human form and changed into the form of Ngalkunburriyaymi as a result of various ancestral adventures. Today the Kuninjku believe that Ngalkunburriyaymi are alive and well and living in freshwater sites in a number of sacred locations. Some features of a respective country are equated with body parts of Yawkyawk. For example a bend in a river or creek may be said to be 'the tail of the Yawkyawk', a billabong may be 'the head of the Yawkyawk' and so on. Thus different groups can be linked together by means of a shared mythology featured in the landscape, which crosscuts clan and language group boundaries.

—  
Text by Murray Garde and Christiane Keller from the Maningrida Arts and Culture certificate.

**DOROTHY NAPANGARDI**

circa 1956 – 2013  
Warlpiri language group

*Sandhills of Mina Mina*  
2007

synthetic polymer paint on linen  
128 × 198 cm

**PROVENANCE**

Gallery Gondwana, Northern Territory, cat. no. 13121DN  
Vivien Anderson, Melbourne  
The Le Pley Collection, Western Australia

AUD 48,000

This painting depicts a major women's ceremonial site known as Mina Mina, the artist's custodial Country, located near Lake Mackay in the Tanami Desert north of Yuendumu in the Northern Territory. During the Jukurrpa, ancestral women of the Napangardi and Napanangka subsection groups (aunt–niece relationship, in which knowledge is passed from one to the other) gathered to collect ceremonial digging sticks (*karlangu*) that had emerged from the ground. They then proceeded east, performing rituals of song and dance, to the place known as Jankinyi. A large belt of trees (*Casuarina decaisneana*) now stand where these digging sticks once were.

This painting shows yet another development in the ever-evolving style of DOROTHY NAPANGARDI. Made up of two enormous

soakage areas and endless sandhills, here Dorothy and her aunts (Napanankas) perform rituals of dance and song as part of their passing on of Jukurrpa.

Using a myriad of coloured dots set against a black background, Dorothy has created a shifting sea of wonderfully harmonious colour that gathers and disperses across the canvas. Like the sandhills in constant flux around and through the artist's Country, this painting moves, backwards and forwards, the rippling effect so like that of the wind's tracks in the sand.

—  
Drawn from the Gallery Gondwana certificate.

**KANYA TJAPANGATI**

circa 1950 – 2006  
Pintupi language group

*Untitled – Yaltintjanya*  
2001

synthetic polymer paint on linen  
153 × 183 cm

**PROVENANCE**

Papunya Tula Artists, Northern Territory, cat. no. KT0111258  
Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne  
Private Collection, Northern Territory

**EXHIBITED**

Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne  
Australia, Pintupi Show

AUD 55,000

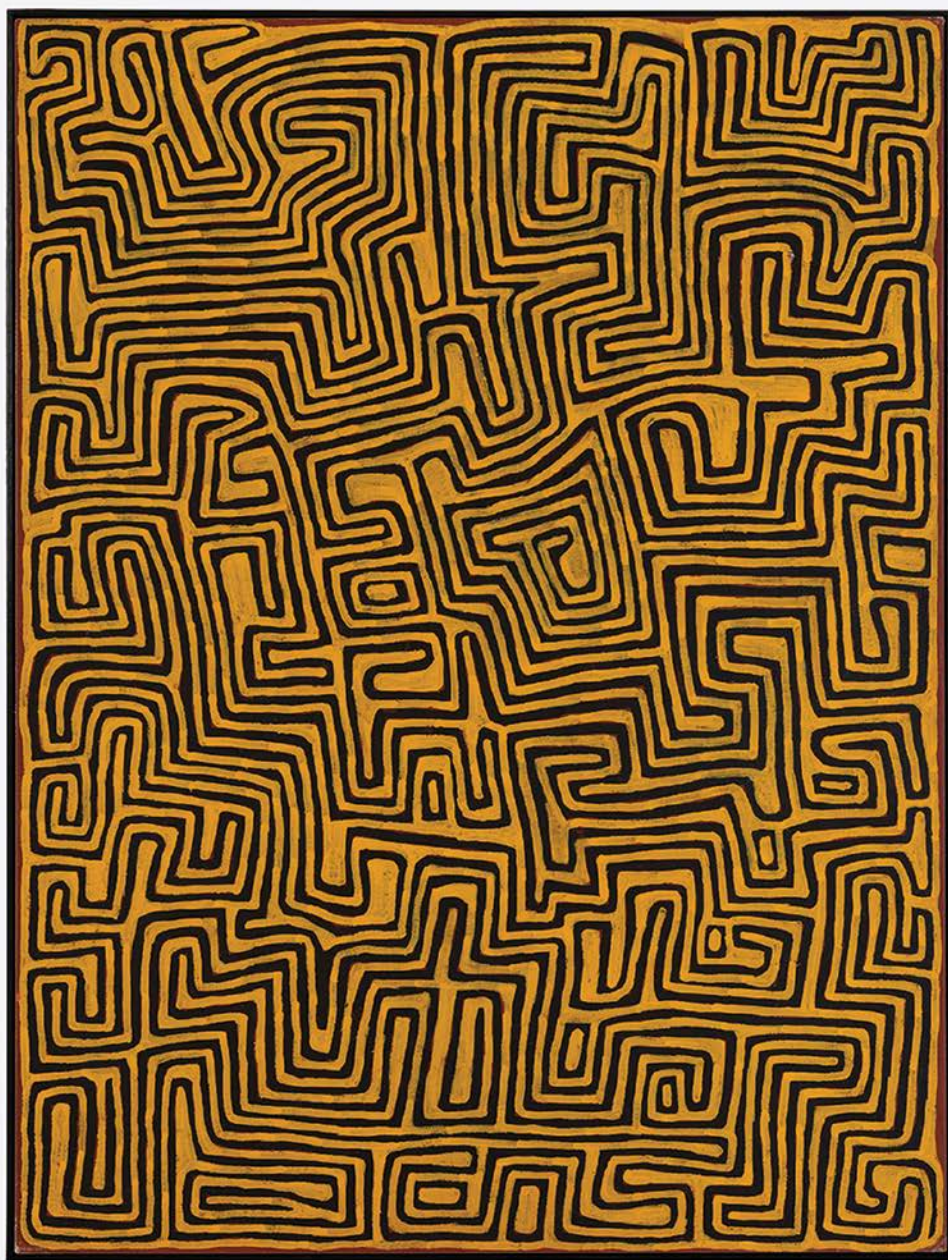
KANYA TJAPANGATI was born near Jupiter Well in Western Australia in approximately 1954. A decade later his family were contacted by a Northern Territory Welfare patrol and moved east, meeting up with other Pintupi countrymen and women at the government-run settlement of Papunya. As a young man in Papunya, Kanya witnessed the birth of the desert art movement and observed many of the Papunya Tula greats creating the seminal works of the early 1970s. His first paintings for the Papunya Tula company were done in 1980, and being around twenty-six years old at the time, he was easily one of the youngest members of the group. His family connections with other well known Western Desert artists run deep; he is a direct nephew of Pinta Pinta Tjapanangka and brother to Charlie Tjapangati and Nanyuma and Bombatu Napangati.

Although Kanya was a consistent painter with Papunya Tula Artists, his early career was often spent in the shadows of the senior and more high profile men at the company. This changed over time, however, and by the 1990s he was being exhibited regularly, sometimes up to four or five times in the same year. It was not long after this that he traded in the more common and conventional dotting technique most other Pintupi painters employed by reducing it back to a purely painterly style, using just the brush without the dotting stick. By the end of the 1990s until his passing in 2006, Kanya's works had evolved considerably,

shifting from connected concentric roundels to graphic lineal representations more akin to precisely carved wooden shields than painted linen. The roundels had become squares, rectangles and gently meandering parallel lines, evoking the subtle shifting of the desert dunes that dominate the Western Desert landscape of his homeland.

Astute followers of Papunya Tula and the desert art movement had by now come to recognise Kanya as a major figure within the company, and the turn of the century heralded in his most critically acclaimed period. His gentle, quiet and reserved personality seemed at odds with the strength and visual power of the large-scale works he'd now become renowned for. A further testament to his reputation was the steadily growing list of collections that had acquired his work, including several state galleries within Australia, along with collections in the Netherlands and the US. As an additional sign of his respect and stature within the company, Kanya was invited to join seven other senior Pintupi men in the creation of the Kiwirrkurra Men's Collaborative painting. This iconic work formed the centrepiece of a charity auction at the Art Gallery of New South Wales in 2000 which raised the original funding used to establish a remote dialysis service for Western Desert communities.

**PAUL SWEENEY**

**RONNIE TJAMPITJINPA**

Born circa 1943  
Pintupi language group

*Untitled – Umari*

2007  
synthetic polymer paint on linen  
122 × 91 cm

**PROVENANCE**

Papunya Tula Artists, Northern  
Territory, cat. no. RT0501100  
Private Collection, Northern Territory

AUD 30,000

This painting depicts designs associated with the rockhole site of Umari, east of Mt Webb in Western Australia. This is the artist's father's Country, and it holds a childhood memory for the artist, as he became separated momentarily from his father while standing near a big rockhole. In ancestral times a Tingarri Man of the Tjakamarra kinship subsection travelled from Kampurarrpa, north of the Ehrenberg Range. He travelled west to Umari, where he had a liaison with a woman of the Nangala kinship subsection. This is a mother-in-law relationship, which is very taboo in Aboriginal culture. He then speared a kangaroo and tried to light a fire using his woomera and a fire stick but was unsuccessful. He moved close to the main rockhole at the site and was then able to light the fire, and cooked

and ate the kangaroo before travelling south. Since events associated with the Tingarri Cycle are of a secret nature no further detail was given. Generally, the Tingarri are a group of ancestral characters of the Dreaming who travelled over vast stretches of the Country, performing rituals and creating and shaping particular sites. The Tingarri Men were usually followed by Tingarri Women and accompanied by novices, and their travels and adventures are enshrined in a number of song cycles. These narratives form part of the teachings of the post initiatory youths today as well as providing explanations for contemporary customs.

—  
Drawn from the Papunya Tula Artists certificate.

**BOBBY WEST TJUPURRULA**

Born circa 1958  
Pintupi language group

*Untitled – Wilkinkarra*

2013  
synthetic polymer paint on linen  
153 × 122 cm

**PROVENANCE**

Papunya Tula Artists, Northern  
Territory, cat. no. BW1303040  
Private Collection, Melbourne

AUD 36,000

This painting depicts designs associated with the lake site of Wilkinkarra (Lake Mackay) and rockhole site of Pinari. In ancestral times a large group of Tingarri Men travelled to these sites from Yunala, west of Kiwirrkurra, to perform the dances and sing the songs associated with the region. The lower lines in this painting depict the sandhills the men passed on their journey from Yunala, while the upper canvas is dominated by the shape of Wilkinkarra. Just below this shape sits the rockhole site of Pinari. Since events associated with the Tingarri Cycle are of a secret nature no further detail was given. Generally, the Tingarri

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 Tingarri Men were usually followed by Tingarri Women and accompanied by novices, and their travels and adventures are enshrined in a number of song cycles. These stories form part of the teachings of the post initiatory youths today as well as providing explanations for contemporary customs.

—  
Drawn from the Papunya Tula Artists certificate.

**DOREEN REID NAKAMARRA**

circa 1955 – 2009  
Pintupi language group

*Untitled – Marrapinti*

2007  
synthetic polymer paint on linen  
153 × 183 cm

**PROVENANCE**

Papunya Tula Artists, Northern Territory, cat. no. DR0708151  
The Le Pley Collection,  
Western Australia

AUD 110,000

As the crow flies, Warburton is over 500 kilometres (300 miles) south of Kiwirrkurra, and far from the shared Country where most of the Papunya Tula artists originate and reside. DOREEN REID NAKAMARRA was born and grew up near the Warburton Ranges, and as a young girl travelled with her parents to the ration depot of Haasts Bluff and the Papunya community, before later returning to Warburton and her father's traditional lands. In the early 1980s, she again travelled north, this time to Kintore, where she met her husband, George 'Tjampu' Tjapaltjarri, before the pair eventually settled further west at the tiny Pintupi outpost of Kiwirrkurra.

In 1996, Doreen was one of about fifteen women in Kiwirrkurra who took up the opportunity of painting with Papunya Tula. Like many of the women at the time, her early works were tentative, wildly varied and, in many ways, done in a 'made for market' style. Her first painting for Papunya Tula Artists was completed in June 1996. It was a small figurative depiction of a snake beside a rockhole, something that could not be further from the large-scale minimalist masterpieces she became renowned for later in her career. Her husband, Tjampu, had long been an artist with the company, after beginning his career some twelve years earlier, in 1983. For many years, Tjampu had been refining a style of lineal minimalism, using a simple dichromatic palette, which undoubtedly had a huge influence on Doreen's developing style and was clearly evident in her late-career works.

By the time Tjampu passed away in 2005, Nakamarra's painting style was confident, precise

and powerful. She was regularly working on large-scale canvases with stunning success and was now firmly established among the very best artists at Papunya Tula. In 2006, Doreen came to the attention of Brenda L. Croft, then curator of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art at the National Gallery of Australia, who selected her for the inaugural *National Indigenous Art Triennial: 'Culture Warriors'*, which opened the following year, 2007. By the time *Culture Warriors* opened, Doreen's work was fiercely sought after by gallerists, collectors and curators of state galleries across the nation. In the space of one short, groundbreaking year, Doreen placed works in the state galleries of the Australian Capital Territory, South Australia, Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland. She also took the General Painting Award at the annual National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards and was exhibited in the Sydney and Moscow biennales. It was quite simply one of the most astonishing and unrivalled periods of success for any Papunya Tula painter in the company's history.

In a cruel twist of fate, at just fifty-four years old, Doreen passed away from complications relating to pneumonia, and with her passing the nation lost one of its most beautiful, dazzling and sublime Indigenous artists. Each and every one of her works remains a precious reminder of someone whose career arguably grew faster, went higher and shone brighter than any other Western Desert artist before her.

**PAUL SWEENEY**



### NAATA NUNGURRAYI

circa 1932 – 2021  
Pintupi language group

#### *Untitled – Ngaminya*

2006  
synthetic polymer paint on linen  
153 × 61 cm

### PROVENANCE

Papunya Tula Artists, Northern Territory, cat. no. NN0603225  
Private Collection, Melbourne

AUD 30,000

This painting depicts designs associated with the rockhole and soakage water site of Ngaminya, just to the south-west of the Kiwirrkurra community in Western Australia.

During ancestral times a group of women camped at this site after travelling from the rockhole site of Marrapinti in the west.

While in the area they gathered the edible berries known as *kampurarrpa*, or desert raisin from the small shrub *Solanum centrale*. These berries can be eaten straight from the bush but are sometimes ground into a paste and cooked in the coals to form a type of damper.

The women continued their travels further east, passing through the nearby rockhole site of Wirrulnga before travelling north-west to Wilkinkarra (Lake Mackay).

—  
Drawn from the Papunya Tula Artists certificate.

**NAATA NUNGURRAYI**

circa 1932 – 2021  
Pintupi language group

*Untitled – Wala Wala*

2005  
synthetic polymer paint on linen  
107 × 122 cm

**PROVENANCE**

Papunya Tula Artists, Northern  
Territory, cat. no. 0503153  
Private Collection, Alice Springs

AUD 40,000

As anthropologist and silver professor Fred Myers has highlighted in his seminal research on Pintupi's sense of self, the site of NAATA NUNGURRAYI's birthplace is vital to her identity. For those born in the West, they and the land are almost inseparable. When looking at the morphing, billowing forms of *Untitled – Wala Wala* 2005, it is possible to comprehend that the land, like the artist, has flesh, lungs and a beating pulse. In 2005, Naata lived and painted consistently in her home of Kintore, drawing from the Country that gave her life. Although applied painstakingly slowly, the suppleness of her mark-making reflects her lived-in, unbroken connection to the land where she sat and painted.

Naata Nungurrayi was born around 1932 near the rockhole site of Kumilnga, west of Wala Wala in the Pollock Hills in the Gibson Desert, Western Australia, a harsh environment with limited diversity. It is a vast sand desert country, where various Western Desert families, driven out by the cyclic drought conditions, traversed eastwards towards white settlements. As a young girl, Naata travelled around the Country with

her family and two sisters, traversing Tingarri Dreaming routes that meet and cross through the Pollock Hills. These travels would authorise Naata's cultural responsibilities to specific sites: Wala Wala and Ngarpungkunya and the Kanaputa ancestral women's travelling sites of Marrapinti rockhole, Wirrulnga rockhole and soakage east of Kiwirrkurra, Ngaminya rockhole and Wanku and Piti Kutjarra soakage. Karilwarra, two rockholes north-west of Kiwirrkurra, is what Naata describes as 'her home'.

Drawing from the ancestral narratives of the places she represents, she sings her paintings into being. Through this song, her dynamic performances materialise interchangeably as topographical and iconographic maps of Country, evoking sandhills, water sources and the shifting hues of the desert.

**VANESSA MERLINO**

—  
Reference: Fred Myers, *Pintupi Country, Pintupi Self: Sentiment, Place and Politics among Western Desert Aborigines*. Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, 1986.

**MAKINTI NAPANANGKA**

circa 1922 – 2011  
Pintupi language group

*Untitled – Lupulnga*

2009  
synthetic polymer paint on linen  
107 × 91 cm

**PROVENANCE**

Papunya Tula Artists, Northern Territory, cat. no. MN0902053  
Private Collection, Melbourne

AUD 33,000

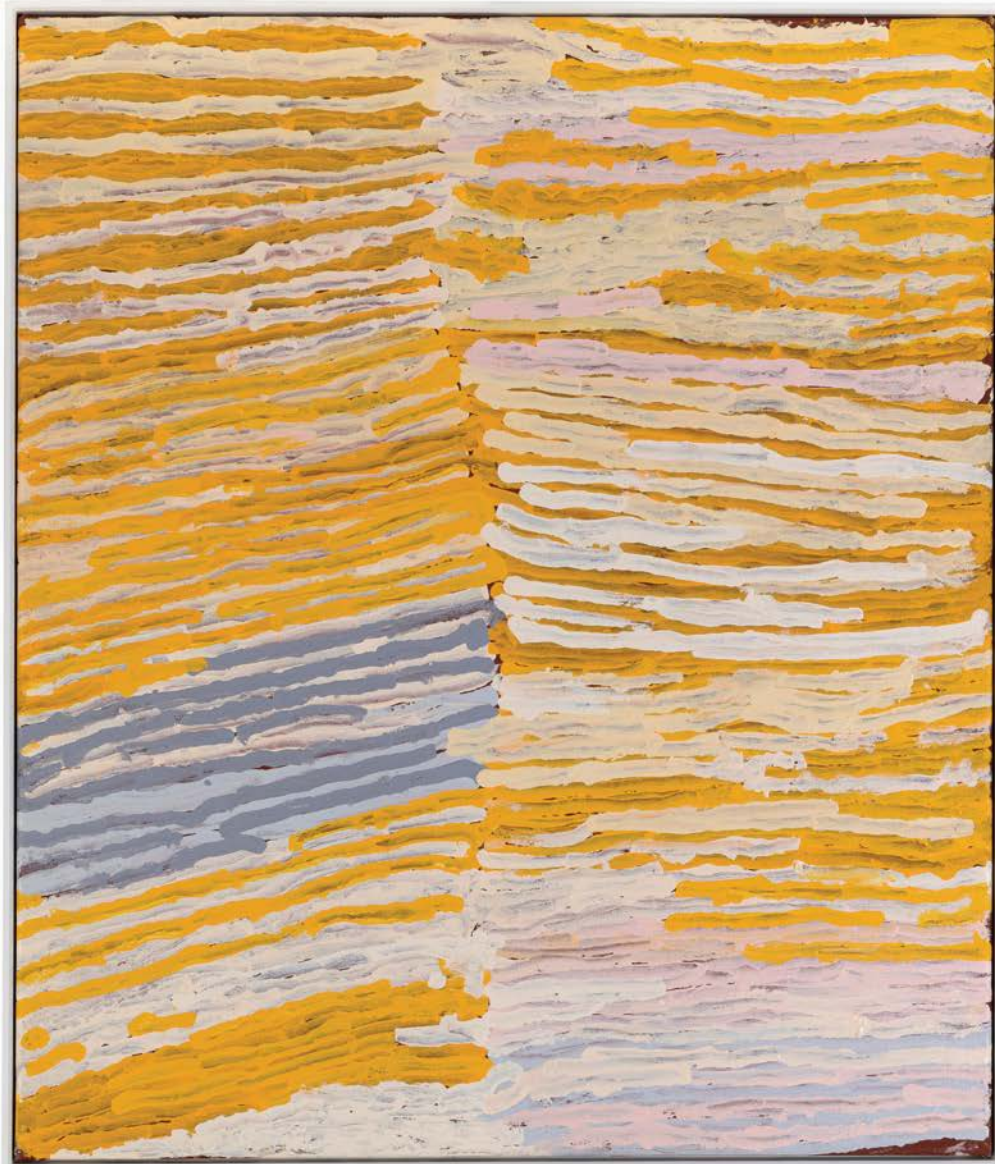
This painting depicts designs associated with the site of Lupulnga, a rockhole situated south of the Kintore community. The Peewee (small bird) Dreaming is associated with this site, as well as the Kungka Kutjarra or Two Travelling Women Dreaming.

During ancestral times a group of women visited this site, holding ceremonies associated with the area, before continuing their travels north to Kaakuratintja (Lake MacDonald), and later the Kintore area.

The lines in the painting represent spun hairstring, which is used in the making of nyimparra (hairbelts), which are worn by both men and women during ceremonies.

—

Drawn from the Papunya Tula Artists certificate.

**MAKINTI NAPANANGKA**

circa 1922 – 2011  
Pintupi language group

*Untitled – Lupulnga*

2009  
synthetic polymer paint on linen  
107 × 91 cm

**PROVENANCE**

Papunya Tula Artists, Northern Territory, cat. no. MN0901067  
Private Collection, Melbourne

AUD 33,000

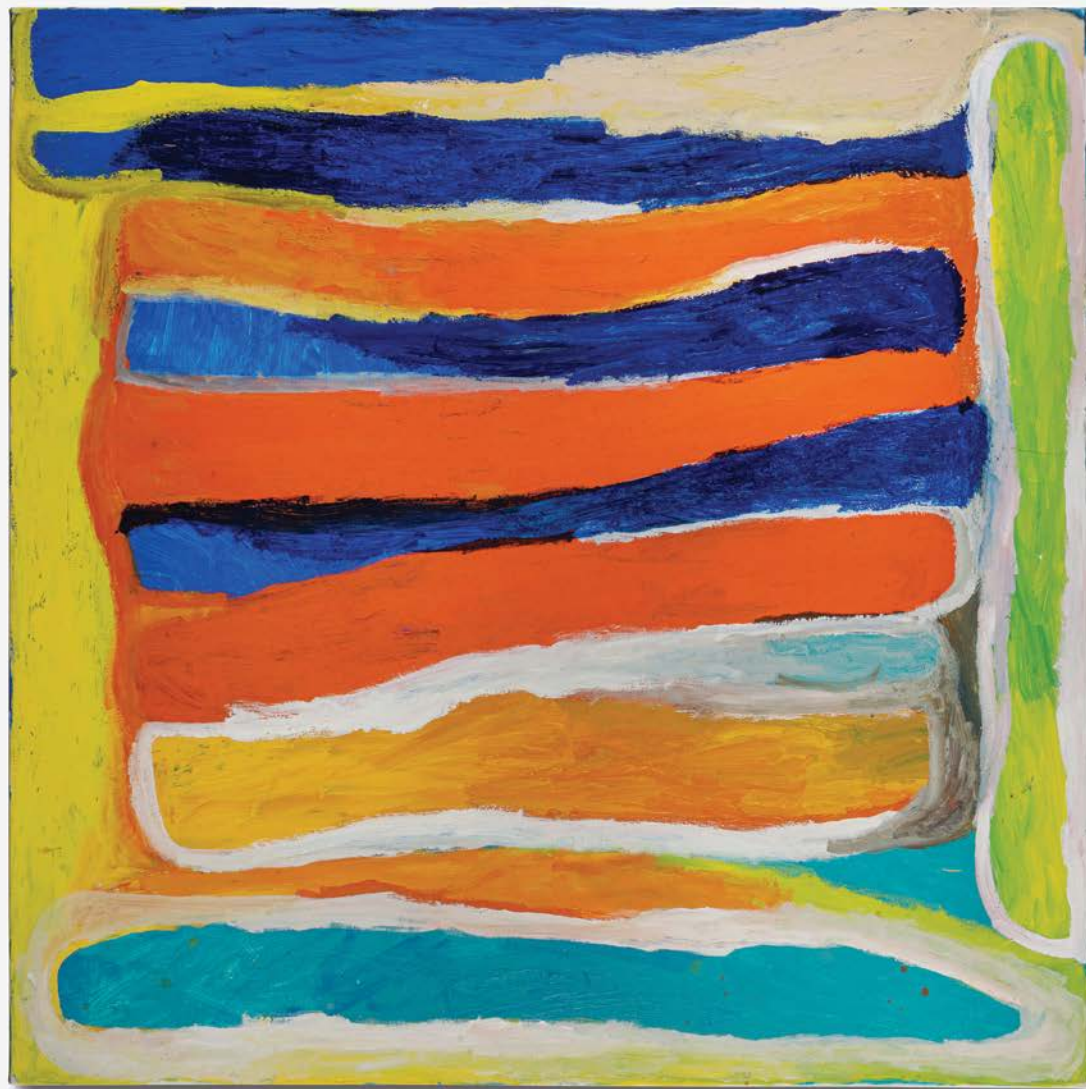
By 2009, MAKINTI NAPANANGKA's beloved site of Lupul, south of Kintore, had been her subject of intense artistic and narrative focus for fifteen years. When she first picked up a brush at the Minyma Tjukurrpa: Kintore–Haasts Bluff women's canvas project in 1994, Makinti defined herself as a confident and singular artist, unwavering in her approach and committed entirely to the brush.

Makinti's physical capacity informed her style and technique, as for another late-career matriarch of the desert. Before 2000, her limited eyesight due to cataracts dictated her mark-making, resulting in a series of works that captured the enthusiasm of her creative intention, if not the accuracy. After cataract surgery, Makinti embraced the entire spectrum, refining her style in a complex network of tight-coloured roundels representing rockholes and water sources. These tight circles eventually unfolded into long, sweeping arcs representing nyimparra, or hairstring skirts, worn by dancing women.

The skirts of the ancestral women who once danced across the earth at her most celebrated site of Lupul is the imagery on which Makinti settled until the end of her painting career as a dedicated member of Papunya Tula Artists. The two paintings *Untitled – Lupulnga* 2009 are from a period where broad, trembling areas of colour have replaced the tight linear outlines of the ancestral women's skirts. The paint has been pushed and pulled into the canvas with such intent that the brush's metal ferrule has scratched through the wet paint. These later paintings capture both the fragility and strength of one of the most influential artists of the Western Desert.

**VANESSA MERLINO**

—  
Reference: *Makinti Napanangka, Papunya Tula Artists*, exhibition catalogue 2009.

**WAKARTU CORY SURPRISE**

1929–2011  
Walmajarri language group

*Pitil Jila*

2009  
synthetic polymer paint on linen  
120 × 120 cm

**PROVENANCE**

Mangkaja Arts, Western  
Australia, cat. no. 422/09  
The Le Pley Collection,  
Western Australia

AUD 16,000

It was her bold style and fondness for storytelling that made WAKARTU CORY SURPRISE a celebrated contemporary artist. Cory Surprise was born in the Great Sandy Desert on Wayampajarti Country at Jila Tapu in 1929. She is from the Mangalili clan belonging to the Yirritja moiety. She spent most of her imperative years on Wayampajarti Country after both her parents had passed away when she was just a baby. Later, with relatives, she relocated to Fitzroy Crossing, in the 1950s.

Cory Surprise first started painting at Karrayili Adult Education Centre in the 1980s and shortly after became one of the first artists at the inaugural art centre, Mangkaja Arts, established in 1984. Among her earliest works, horizontal bands of colour are interspersed with expansive lines and dots. The vast majority of her paintings depict the sandhill country and jila (permanent waterhole) on Tapu or Wayampajarti Country. Water was not only critical to Wakartu and her people's survival but is central to their ceremonial practices and spiritual beliefs.

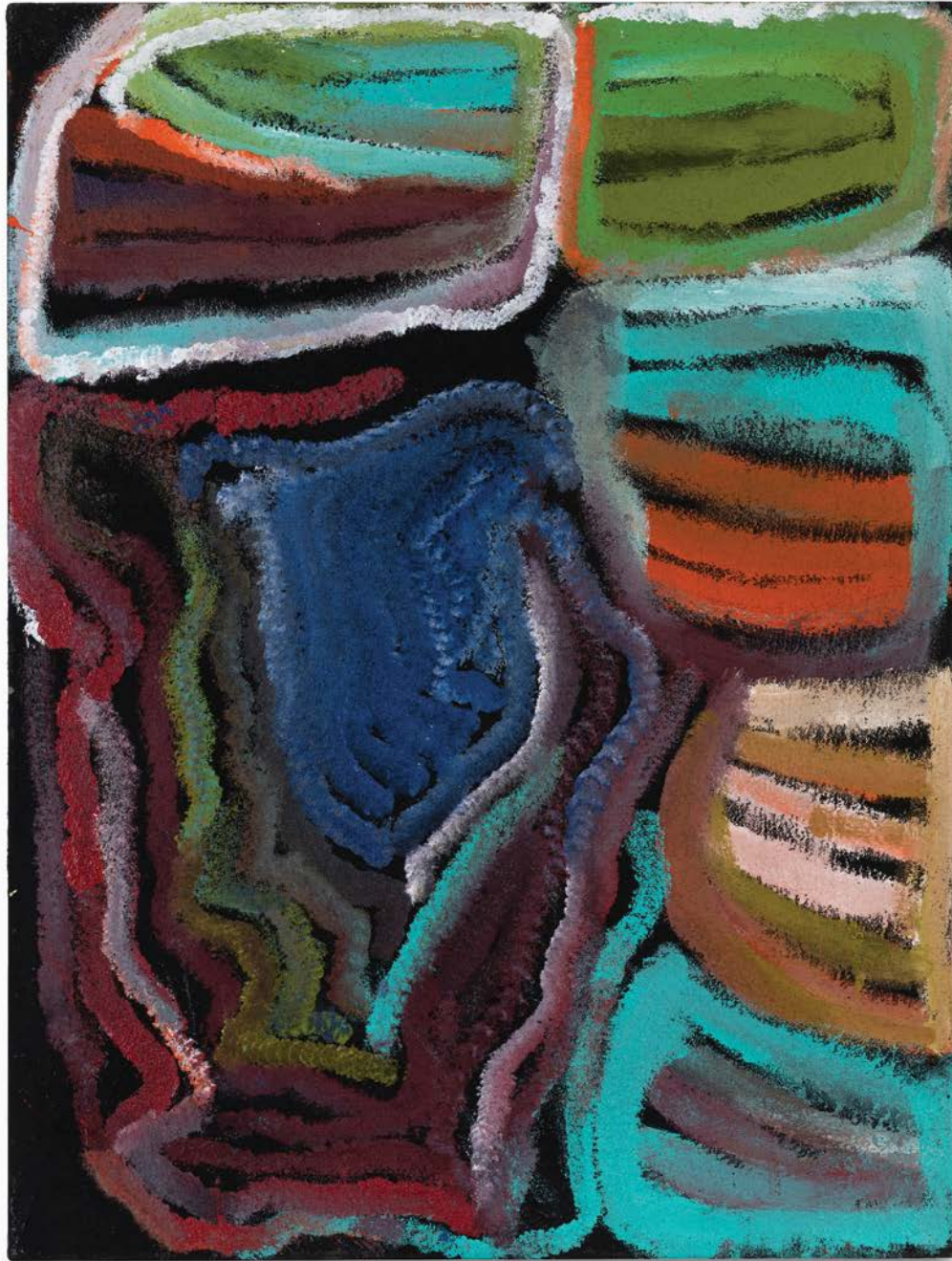
When I paint, I am thinking about law from long time ago, I am thinking about the Country, my Country.

It is her bold use of composition that suggests Cory Surprise's confident knowledge of her Country. *Pitil Jila* 2009 is dominated by rich bands of strong hues and movement that depict the tali (sandhills) and a large jila (permanent waterhole) located on Wayampajarti Country. The vibrant colours encourage the viewer to seek comfort in and inspiration from her work. Painting was essentially Cory Surprise's response to her love of storytelling.

Several solo exhibitions have honoured Cory Surprise's uninhibited style of painting, with her first solo show being held in 2004 in Sydney. Her work is represented in several major collections including the National Gallery of Australia, the Art Gallery of New South Wales, the Aboriginal Art Museum in the Netherlands and The Laverty Collection, among others. Wakartu received the Telstra Work on Paper Award in 1997 and the Western Australian Indigenous Art Award in 2009.

**CHLOE JONES**

—  
Mangkaja Arts Resource Agency documentation.

**JAN BILLYCAN**

1930–2016  
Yulparija language group

*Kirriwirri*  
2007

natural earth pigments with  
synthetic polymer paint on linen  
101 × 76 cm

**PROVENANCE**

Short St Gallery, Western  
Australia, cat. no. 23147  
Private Collection, Melbourne

AUD 12,000

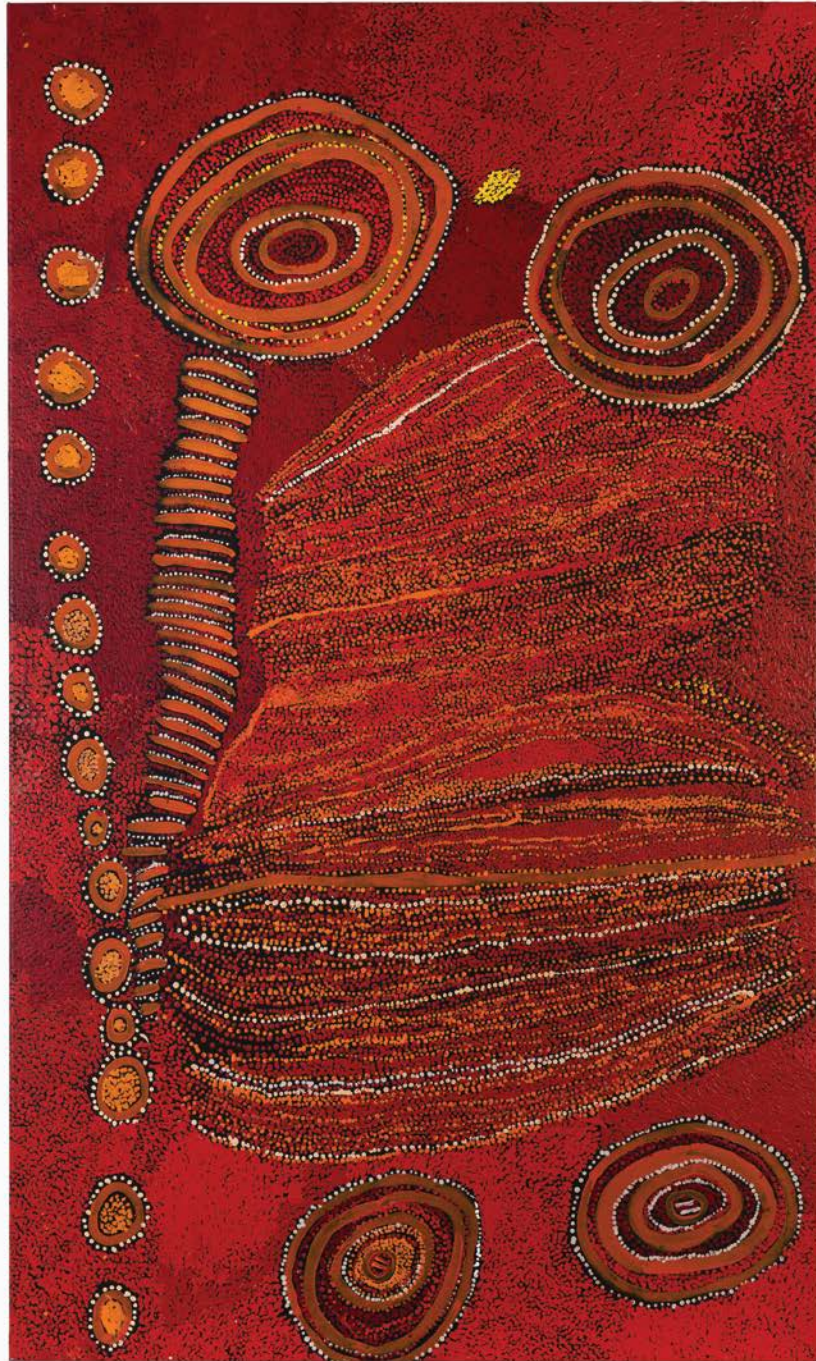
JAN BILLYCAN (Djan Nanudie) grew up in Ilyarra Country. There are jila (living waters) in this Country, including Karrparti, Kawarr, Jurntiwa and Wirrguj. Other places include Dodo, Kartal, Kirriwirri and Yukarri. When Jan was young, she walked all around these places with her parents. Jan says,

In living water there is a quiet snake. Sometimes he rises up, but we sing him down, sometimes he can travel and bring rain. Ilyarra is my Country, Ilyarra, where I grew up. Lots of tali (sand dunes) and jila in this Country. This big dog Country.

This place is the birthplace of my father's clan. Our clan is also named Kirriwirri, and [we] call each individual member of this clan Kirriwirri. There is a big warla (mud flat) at this place. This is what this painting is about.

Kirriwirri is in the Great Sandy Desert, close to and west of Well 33 on the Canning Stock Route. It is the birthplace of Jan and her family. This work shows tali (sand dunes) and jila (living water).

—  
Drawn from the Short Street Gallery documentation.

**WINGU TINGIMA**

circa 1920 – 2010  
Pitjantjatjara language group

*Kungkarrakalpa*

2009  
synthetic polymer paint on linen  
120 × 198 cm

**PROVENANCE**

Tjungu Palya, South Australia,  
cat. no. 09068  
Marshall Arts, Adelaide  
Private Collection, Melbourne

AUD 40,000

WINGU TINGIMA was born south of Irrunytju in Western Australia near Kuru Ala, an important and sacred cave site of the Kungkarrakalpa Tjukurpa – The Seven Sisters Story. The sisters travelled a vast distance across the Western Desert, chased and watched by a lustful older man, Nyiru, who wanted to take one of the young women as a wife. It is an epic narrative of pursuit, voyeurism, obsession and sex told to generations of young women; it is also a cautionary tale, where the only salvation from the destruction of dangerous desire lies in the ability to be canny, remain in solidarity, and trust in the family bond.

The site of Kuru Ala holds special and emotional significance for women of the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands. The vast lore of the Seven

Sisters captured in the Pleiades constellation in the southern night sky has a physical presence in places such as this. Drawing from a network of ancestral imagery, Wingu evokes and alludes to the typology found in rock art, sand drawings and body design rather than explicitly depicting her Country. A senior custodian of its stories, Wingu stayed strongly associated with her birth site and maintained a deep affinity with Kuru Ala and Kungkarrakalpa throughout her acclaimed practice.

**VANESSA MERLINO**

—  
Reference: Margo Neale (ed.), *Songlines: Tracking the Seven Sisters*, National Museum of Australia Press, Canberra, 2017.



### JAKAYU BILJABU

Born circa 1936  
Manyjilyjarra language group

#### *Wikiri*

2014  
synthetic polymer paint on linen  
152 x 105 cm

### PROVENANCE

Martumilli Artists, Western  
Australia, cat. no. 14-31  
Outstation Gallery, Darwin  
Private Collection, Melbourne

### EXHIBITIONS

Salon des Refusés,  
Darwin, August 2014

AUD 24,000

JAKAYU BILJABU is a respected senior member of the Martumilli artists and is known for her confident style of painting. She was born in the mid 1930s on Manyjilyjarra Country, located in the central Great Sandy Desert. In 1963, Biljabu and her extended family moved off Country to Jigalong (established in 1907). They were among the last to leave their home Country and traditional life. It was during an extreme drought in the region that they decided to make this move, by which time Biljabu was married with three children. Biljabu became a baker at the mission and several other stations, including Strelley Station, before moving with her family to Punmu community shortly after its development in 1981. She continues to live with her family in Punmu today, using her art as a way of passing down cultural knowledge to younger Martu generations.

*Wikiri* 2014 transports the viewer into the desert landscape. The rich and bountiful array of colours hum with the energies of this land, revealing Biljabu's intimate knowledge of Country. The undulating tali (sandhills) dominate the landscape and the canvas. A small roundel depicts an ancestral site, a large water soak and claypan located east of Parnngurr along the Canning Stock Route. While Biljabu was living on her Country, this site was

essential to her survival and was of great cultural importance to her family. Biljabu recalls *Wikiri* in part of a Jukurrpa (Dreaming) narrative, Minyi Puru (Seven Sisters):

Wirnpa and another man were travelling from the West. When he landed at Wikiri, he spread all of the food, mitutu, nyunjin and yukiri seeds. At Yinyaru, they saw flashing lights and the man found an enormous hailstone pulsating with light. He flew with Wirnpa, holding the hailstone against his belly. He dropped it when it became too heavy, they picked it up and kept going.

Jakayu Biljabu is an award-winning artist. Her work has been widely celebrated across Australia and internationally and was selected for the Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards. Her work has been acquired by several major institutions including the National Museum of Australia, the National Gallery of Victoria and Queensland Art Gallery's Gallery of Modern Art.

### CHLOE JONES

—

Drawn from the Martumilli Artists documentation.

**CARLENE WEST**

1944–2021  
Pitjantjatjara language group

*Tjitjiti*

2014  
synthetic polymer paint on linen  
137 × 110 cm

**PROVENANCE**

Spinifex Arts Project, Western  
Australia, cat. no. 14081  
Raft Artspace, Alice Springs  
Private Collection, Western Australia

**EXHIBITED**

*Carlene West*, 6 – 27 September  
2014, Raft Artspace, Alice Springs

**LITERATURE**

Ian McLean, *Rattling Spears: A History  
of Indigenous Australian Art*, Reaction  
Books Ltd, London, 2016, p. 198 (illus.)

AUD 32,000

The salt lake of Tjitjiti is in the remote region of Spinifex Country in the Great Victoria Desert. It is the singular subject of Carlene West's paintings, as she was born at this site circa 1944. Carlene was a teenage girl still living and travelling with her parents when she was brought into the Cundeelee mission in 1959.

When Carlene first commenced painting in 1997, for the Spinifex Arts Project, the site at the heart of her traditional lands was embedded in her childhood memory. The dominant feature of Carlene's home of Tjitjiti is a vast white salt pan ringed by craggy sandhills. She would continue to paint from memory for many years until, in 2007, a spur road was pushed into Tjitjiti from an existing mining road. In 2009, Carlene and her family could

finally make the arduous and challenging journey back, after which her paintings depicting the lake changed and expanded.

In 2014, Raft Artspace in Alice Springs held Carlene's first solo show, a glorious presentation of the fruits of her intense focus on Tjitjiti since 2012. Just as the narratives associated with this place had emerged with renewed iconographic clarity from her visit in 2007, the lake's boundaries began to transform and grow as it carried the artist through her gentle slide into Alzheimer's disease.

**VANESSA MERLINO**

—

Reference: Spinifex Arts Project documentation.

**CARLENE WEST**

1944–2021  
Pitjantjatjara language group

*Tjitjiti*

2014

synthetic polymer paint on linen  
182 × 122 cm

**PROVENANCE**

Spinifex Arts Project, Western  
Australia, cat. no. 14082  
Raft Artspace, Northern Territory  
Private Collection, Melbourne

**EXHIBITED**

*Carlene West*, 6 – 27 September  
2014, Raft Artspace, Alice Springs

AUD 95,000

Two ancestor women are walking across the salt lake with a child. They are called by a stranger from the north, Wati Kinika (the Native Cat man), to hand over the child. The women try to escape but Wati Kinika releases a hail of spears, one of which impales the two women and the child as one. A rocky outcrop rising at one end of the lake is the women and child standing where they were murdered – a protruding seam of reddish brown and white is the clutch of spears hurled by the Native Cat man. Kinika travelled on to Ooldea, where he encountered Pira (the Moon man). A massive, rolling fight ensued between the supernatural beings, clashing repeatedly along the Ooldea Range and a number of large salt lakes in the area on the way to Lake Wyola, where Pira finally subdued and killed Kinika. Justice had been satisfied, harmony reinstated and Pira was able to take up his appointed role as the illuminator of the night world.

—  
Reference: John Carty, 'Carlene West: The End of Exploring' in *Marking the Infinite: Contemporary Women Artists from Aboriginal Australia from the Debra and Dennis Scholl Collection*, 2017.



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#### ABOUT

Formed in 2016, D'Lan Contemporary sources, exhibits and sells exceptional works of art by leading and emerging First Nations Australian artists in Australia and overseas.

#### ETHICS

Our mission is to create a transparent and sustainable marketplace for Australian Indigenous art and to respect and protect the integrity of the artist, the buyer, the seller – and the marketplace – from fraudulent sales or unethical procurement.

We maintain strict ethical practices and only exhibit and sell works of art with a clear line of provenance.

#### THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR AUSTRALIAN INDIGENOUS VISUAL ARTS (NEIVA)

The National Endowment for Indigenous Visual Arts (NEIVA) is an independent charitable trust fund established to centralise and distribute proceeds from art sales back to Australian Indigenous artists and their working communities.

D'Lan Contemporary allocates 30% of annual net profits to NEIVA.

#### PROVENANCE

Every work of art exhibited and sold by D'Lan Contemporary has a clear line of provenance.

Documentation we draw upon to establish provenance includes:

- Community art centre certificate of provenance/authenticity
- Transfer of ownership documentation
- Purchase receipt or invoice
- Inclusion in academic / art historical publications
- Inclusion in exhibitions, and exhibition catalogues (private and/or public institution)
- Collection/exhibition inventory numbers (private and/or public institution)
- Inclusion in auction catalogues
- Documented appraisals

D'Lan Contemporary's guidance on best practice for buying Australian Indigenous art is:

#### CONTEMPORARY AUSTRALIAN INDIGENOUS ART (1980–PRESENT)

All contemporary Australian Indigenous works of art should be accompanied by documentation linking the artwork to the artist via their Community Art Centre or their primary gallery/representative.

**Community Art Centres** operate with an ethical focus and establish their own individual guidelines by which all artworks are sold.

**Primary market** artworks should only be bought from a Community Art Centre or an official artist gallery/representative.

**Secondary market** artworks should only be bought with a source of provenance from a Community Art Centre or an official artist gallery/representative.

#### MODERN INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIAN ART (1950S–1980)

For artworks created prior to the establishment of Community Art Centres, such as bark paintings, Hermannsburg watercolours, Papunya boards and sculptural artworks made for sale, there is less necessity for Community Art Centre provenance.

However, artworks from this period with no traceable history are likely to have less market value than those that do – even when an artwork is clearly authentic.

Highly desirable provenance for artworks from this period includes Papunya Tula Artists, Stuart Art Centre and Maningrida Arts, or a clear link to a primary collector such as Geoffrey Bardon, Dorothy Bennett, Sandra Le Brun Holmes or Dr Scougal – who were all active in the 1950s–1970s.

#### ARTEFACTS AND OBJECTS (1880S–1950)

With artefacts, often much of the important collection history has been lost over time. Therefore, proven provenance can greatly impact value.

Before acquisition, research should be undertaken to ascertain the origin of the artefact or object, and how and when it left its country of origin.

Best practice in this segment is to obtain advice from a trusted industry expert before buying or selling.

#### PROTECTION OF MOVEABLE CULTURAL HERITAGE ACT

*The Protection of Moveable Cultural Heritage Act 1985* (PMCH Act) implements Australia's obligations under the UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, 1970 (1970 UNESCO Convention) to which Australia is a State Party.

The 1970 UNESCO Convention requires State Parties to ensure that no collecting institution accepts illegally exported items.

The Australian Government administers the PMCH Act through the Ministry for the Arts. The PMCH Act regulates the export of Australia's most significant cultural heritage objects by implementing export controls for objects defined as 'Australian Protected Objects'.

If you have any questions about acquiring or selling Australian Indigenous Art, please contact us at: [enquiries@dlancontemporary.com.au](mailto:enquiries@dlancontemporary.com.au)



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# SPINIFEX COUNTRY

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*Works from the  
Spinifex Arts Project*

18 AUGUST – 29 SEPTEMBER 2023

40 Exhibition St, Melbourne VIC 3000  
Wurundjeri Country  
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LAWRENCE PENNINGTON  
*Mituna* 2015 (detail)  
synthetic polymer paint on linen  
137 × 200 cm



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