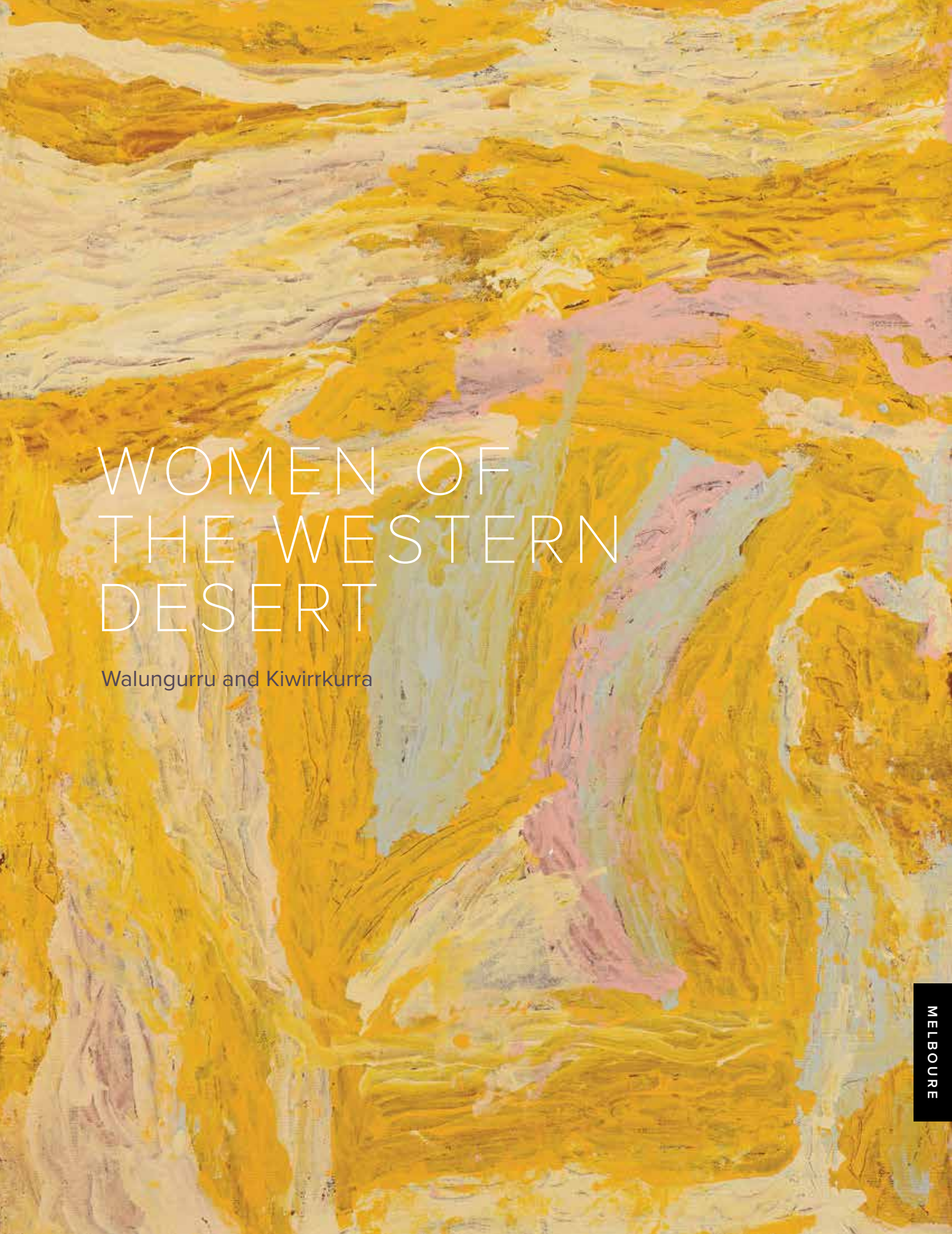


An abstract painting featuring thick, expressive brushstrokes in shades of yellow, orange, and pink. The colors are layered and blended, creating a textured, organic feel. The composition is dominated by these warm tones, with some cooler, light blue and greyish tones visible in the lower right and center areas.

WOMEN OF THE WESTERN DESERT

Walungurru and Kiwirrkurra

MELBOURNE

28 AUGUST – 3 OCTOBER 2025

WOMEN OF THE WESTERN DESERT

Walungurru and Kiwirrkurra

D • C

WOMEN OF THE WESTERN DESERT



A significant shift in Indigenous Australian art occurred in the mid 1990s when Aboriginal women from the Western Desert emerged as important contributors to Australia's cultural landscape. In the early 1970s at Papunya, a group of men founded what later became known as the Western Desert art movement. They established their own company, Papunya Tula Artists, where they largely remained the only contributors for more than two decades. The concept of 'women's painting' highlights an obvious gender gap within this unique Australian art movement. Not only did the sudden influx of women shift the balance and trajectory of the movement, but the visual language of the women painters, by then living at Walungurru (Kintore) and Kiwirrkurra with their families, was so distinct from that of the men before them that it warrants its own separate art history.

If art serves as an expression of being in a specific time and place, Papunya Tula women's painting flourished as a response to the changes happening on their Country and beyond in the mid 1990s. Their experience and view of Country and the Dreaming intersected with the shared effects of double exoduses: the first, when the Pintupi left their lands to join other cultural groups at Papunya, and the second, when, on the back of the outstation movement, they returned to their ancestral lands. The impact of homecoming is especially significant in the origin of the women's art, as was the rise of feminism. The cultural authority and independence of the women finally closed the gender gap, and since they were no longer at Papunya, their Country, rather than someone else's, became the foundation on which they launched their own art movement.

The Western Desert has always been a place of migration, cultural negotiation and relational engagement. Covering approximately 600,000 square kilometres, its terrain

ABOVE: Ngaminya
Photographer: Matt Frost courtesy
of Papunya Tula Artists Pty Ltd



View of Ikuntji (Haasts Bluff) near Papunya. Photographer: Steve Strike

is mainly arid, incorporating the Gibson Desert, the Great Victoria Desert, the Great Sandy Desert and the Little Sandy Desert in the Northern Territory, South Australia and Western Australia.

Pintupi Country is probably the most infertile part of the world's most barren desert, and its population is sparse. It is a vast sandy desert region where, in the 1950s and 1960s, many Western Desert families, displaced by cyclic drought conditions, travelled eastwards towards established settlements and missions. At the government settlement of Papunya, the term 'Pintupi' was used as an imposed social identity to brand the 'newcomers from the West'. Rarely used self-referentially, 'Pintupi' does not represent a single social identity or family group; however, the people from the west shared a strong desire to return to Country and welcomed the chance to move and settle in the newly established community of Walungurru in the early 1980s.

The extraordinary distances Pintupi families travelled are similar to those undertaken by the Tingarri people of the Pintupi's dominant Dreaming, which incorporates the

narratives of ancestral beings as they move across Country, creating landforms and paths within the landscape. Where men usually paint Tingarri narratives, women have ownership of a distinct component – a Dreaming track of female beings, known as Kanaputa, who travel alongside their male counterparts. In the vicinity of Kiwirrkurra, the Kanaputa travelled to sites including Ngaminya, Marrapinti, Yunala and Wirrulnga, which came to feature in the women's paintings. These sites not only reflect the Kanaputa's movement and migration across the land, symbolising human triumph over the environment, but also highlight women's independence and the autonomy of 'women's business', where the ceremonies and designs connected to the Kanaputa are passed down and performed exclusively by the women of the region.

Despite having strong agency in their cultural affairs, the Pintupi women faced challenges in entering the art market and crossing the gender boundaries set at Papunya, which were maintained as Papunya Tula Artists policy for more than twenty years. Although, leading up to the mid 1990s, the wives, widows, sisters and mothers of its founders had become part of the Western Desert art movement, they remained on the fringes, the women at Walungurru and Kiwirrkurra playing secondary roles as beneficiaries or helpers to male artists rather than being seen as protagonists or innovators. This contrasts with other nearby communities, such as Ernabella, established in 1948, and Warlayirti Artists in Balgo and Ikuntji Arts in Haasts Bluff, founded in 1987 and 1992 respectively, where women artists had already formed strong groups. It is therefore notable that the female relatives of the men painting at Papunya Tula Artists, which was officially formed in 1972, were among the last in the Western Desert to become artists themselves.

Further afield, a new wave of women artists was already emerging, giving rise to stylistically diverse artworks from Haasts Bluff, Fitzroy Crossing, Lajamanu and Utopia in the 1980s and early 1990s. Women's mark making, it seems, moved away from a strictly traditional symbolic representation of Country, revealing a sentient and feminine perspective of the land. While women also engaged in the tactile and sensuous act of painting akin to ceremonial body painting, their work evoked bodily sensations and sensibilities in the viewer rather than being experienced as purely aesthetic abstraction.

Although much of the scholarship on women's desert painting has concentrated on the unprecedented rise of Emily Kam Ngwarray, the master of sentient visual language, Ngwarray emerged from an even broader field of women's art. Two notable exhibitions at the forefront of the boom in women's painting illustrate a longer history that predates the Emily impact: *Karnta: Aboriginal Women's Art*, 1987, and *Minymaku – Work of the Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Women's Council*, held in Alice Springs in 1989. A later exhibition, *Bush Women: Fresh Art from Remote WA*, 1994, curated by John Kean, was the first to bring together key Aboriginal artists from the Western Desert's Kimberley region and the Ngaanyatjarra Lands.

In 1991, Hetti Perkins, then curator of Aboriginal Art at the Art Gallery of NSW, presented the *Aboriginal Women's Art Exhibition* as an affirmation of the unmistakable creative drive gaining momentum in the desert and across Australia. The exhibition

was a declaration of liberation. After suffering discrimination against their gender that continued into the mid 1980s, due predominantly to the patriarchal obsessions of white Australia, women ‘at last’ were being recognised as artists. Until the women put the correct protocols in place to represent their Dreamings, their reluctance to paint in the same manner as the men had resulted in the continual creation of traditional items such as baskets, textiles and batik, techniques considered ‘less worthy of the attention of serious art critics’. The legacy of Kngwarray, however, is that she harnessed the ‘craft’ of batik as the vehicle that led the work of women into the realm of fine art. By the time Kngwarray passed away in 1996, she was already regarded as Australia’s greatest contemporary artist.

At the time of Emily Kam Kngwarray’s passing, women’s painting at Walungurru and Kiwirrkurra was finally entering the contemporary art scene, with momentum. Although a small number of women had painted for Papunya Tula Artists since the early 1980s, such as Daisy Leura Nakamarra and Pansy Napangati, the majority of women had been kept at bay, signalling an imminent surge of eager new artists. The suspension of time allowed the women to engage in extensive reflection and to gain a deeper understanding of the cultural, social and economic benefits of creating and selling art, as well as identifying champions who would support their cause. The income from painting sales had been vital to the survival of the new community in the early years and, when visiting her sister Narputta Nangala at nearby Ikuntji (Haasts Bluff), Tatali Nangala (c.1928–1999) had been watching her engage in painting throughout the 1980s, which led to the establishment of the women’s own art centre at Ikuntji in 1993. It is clear that the presence of female anthropologists, teachers, linguists, art coordinators, critics and curators invested in feminism, along with the will of Aboriginal women, provided a legacy that was instrumental in the development of women’s Indigenous contemporary art. The cross-cultural collaboration of Aboriginal women artists working with female non-Indigenous art coordinators was crucial in creating space for Aboriginal women’s art in the 1990s.

Several senior women, including Tatali Nangala, Wintjiya Napaltjarri (c.1932–2014) and Makinti Napanangka (c.1922–2011), approached artist and Ikuntji Arts coordinator Marina Strocchi at Haasts Bluff to access art materials that were unavailable to them in their own community. The family connections that existed between the two communities led to collaborative painting workshops being held at Walungurru in 1994, behind the women’s mountain – Kungka Kutjarra (Two Travelling Women) – which flanks Walungurru, and at Ikuntji in 1995. Strocchi secured funding to run the activities independently of both art centres operating on these homelands. The artworks produced during these workshops, including large-scale collaborative canvases, were exhibited in Adelaide in 1995 to great acclaim. As women’s interest in painting at Papunya Tula Artists grew, the Minyma Tjukurrpa Kintore/Haasts Bluff Canvas Project marked an important step in advancing their aspirations.

The twenty year hiatus in women’s art at Papunya Tula Artists led to a sudden explosion of new expressions and painting styles. The cohort of women approached

painting from the source of their exclusive cultural knowledge – the inherent and learned laws of the female realm – as well as from the accumulated and shared experiences of migration and homecoming. Tatali Nangala was born at Women’s Rockhole, located behind Kungka Kutjarra mountain at Walungurru, making her the most important authority in both women’s Law and ceremony for the area. Her gestural, colour-laden paintings first emerged as a distinct ‘Kintore’ style, drawing directly from the Country that she belonged to and spoke for. After leaving her Country, Makinti Napanangka held the feeling of her birthplace with her for fifty years until she gave form to it in acrylic paint. Guided by touch, and the application of multiple bright colours with the brush, fingers and hands, Napanangka formed a sensuous dialogue on canvas that captured the eternal dance of the ancestral women as they travel up from south-west of Walungurru.

Both Walungurru and Kiwirrkurra promised prosperity for the artists and their families, fostering communities where painting was central to everyday life. Jenny Taylor, who had joined Papunya Tula Artists in 1994, had been a firm internal advocate for the women and was a great support to them in their first year as company artists. With ongoing access to art materials and a permanent workspace provided through Papunya Tula Artists, the artists could freely create bold statements within the confines of secret sacred designs. This freedom helped reshape the blueprint of Western Desert art, which had evolved from initial formal experiments in iconography, sacred imagery, dot and circle into a striking, holistic visual language that made Pintupi Country accessible to the rest of the world.

VANESSA MERLINO

SOURCES:

Jennifer L. Biddle, *Breasts, Bodies, Canvas: Central Desert Art as Experience*, UNSW Press, Sydney, 2007.
David Brooks, *Dreamings and Connections to Country Among the Ngaanyatjarra and Pintupi of the Australian Western Desert*, PhD Thesis, Australian National University, Canberra, 2011.
Henrietta Fourmile, ‘Aboriginal women – artists at last!’, in Hetti Perkins (ed.), *Aboriginal Women’s Exhibition*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 1991, pp. 4–6. Published following the exhibition *Aboriginal Women’s Exhibition*, curated by Hetti Perkins at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, 10 September – 10 November 1991.
Darren Jorgensen, ‘The Western Desert diaspora’, in Darren Jorgensen (ed.), *Bush Women*, Fremantle Arts Centre, Fremantle, 2018, pp. 45–88.
John Kean, *Dot, Circle and Frame: How Kaapa Tjampitjinpa, Tim Leura, Clifford Possum and Johnny Warangula Created Papunya Tula Art*, PhD Thesis, University of Melbourne, Carlton, 2020.
Fred Myers, *Pintupi Country, Pintupi Self: Sentiment, Place, and Politics Among Western Desert Aborigines*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1986.
Fred Myers and Henry Skeritt (eds), *Irrititja Kuwarrri Tjungu (Past & Present Together): Fifty Years of Papunya Tula Artists*, Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection of the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, 2021.
Una Rey, ‘Women in the cross-cultural studio: invisible tracks in the Indigenous artist’s archive’, in Jacqueline Millner and Catriona Moore (eds), *Feminist Perspectives on Art: Contemporary Outtakes*, Routledge, New York, 2018, pp. 38–56.
Marina Strocchi, *Minyma Tjukurrpa – Kintore Haasts Bluff Canvas Project*, exhibition catalogue, Tandanya National Aboriginal Cultural Institute, Adelaide, 10 June – 13 August 1995.

WESTERN DESERT REGION



View from the top of Kungka Kutjarra (Women's Mountain). Photographer: Matt Frost courtesy of Papunya Tula Artists Pty Ltd

WESTERN DESERT



WALUNGURRU

Walungurru (Kintore) is located in the Kintore Range of the Northern Territory, about 530 kilometres west of Alice Springs in the Pintupi homelands. After successful water bores were sunk near the foothills of the Kintore Range, an outstation was set up in mid 1981 and developed as a resource centre for camps elsewhere in the region. Following the initial work of community building and reconnecting with Country, many families joined the migration west from Papunya to establish the community and to continue painting closer to home. The women who began painting here in 1996 developed a signature style, becoming renowned for their confident, expressive lines and dense, vibrant application of paint.

Ngutjul near Walungurru.
Photographer: Matt Frost
courtesy of Papunya Tula Artists



TATALI NANGALA

c. 1928 – 1999
Pintupi language

*Untitled – Women's Ceremonies
at Warlukaritja* 1996

synthetic polymer paint on linen
151 × 118.5 cm (59.4 × 46.7 inches)

PROVENANCE

The Artist, painted at Kintore,
Northern Territory
Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs,
Northern Territory, cat. no. TN 961130
Private Collection
Aboriginal Art, Sotheby's, Melbourne,
Victoria, 26 June 2000, lot 238
Private Collection, Melbourne,
Victoria, acquired from the above

AUD 22,000

For Tatali Nangala (c.1928–1999), Walungurru was her Country, making her the most important authority in both women's Law and ceremony, as well as in the women's art movement. Born at Women's Rockhole behind Kungka Kutjarra (Two Travelling Women) mountain at the community of Walungurru, Tatali was a key and influential figure in the stylistic development of the art produced by the women who settled there. Tatali Nangala, like many Pintupi, lived in Ikuntji (Haasts Bluff) and later Papunya from the late 1950s to the 1970s before Walungurru was established and she returned home.

Tatali was deeply aware of the power that came with being an artist, having observed her husband, Charlie Wartuma Tjungurrayi, rise to fame through numerous opportunities for international travel, cross-cultural exchange and

success. He participated in major exhibitions during the mid 1980s and was honoured with a retrospective exhibition that travelled throughout Australia in 1986. Additionally, Tatali watched her sister Narputta Nangala and other women living at Ikuntji engage in painting throughout the 1980s, which eventually led to the establishment of their own art centre in 1993. It was through the efforts of senior women like Tatali that the women of Walungurru gained their self-determination. Tatali's gestural, colour-rich paintings draw directly from the Country around her – the land she belongs to and can speak for. This assertiveness, coupled with her knowledge gained from observing the evolution of Western Desert painting and her determination to approach painting differently, fostered an aesthetic that first emerged and developed as a distinct 'Kintore' style.



NAATA NUNGURRAYI

c. 1932 – 2021
Pintupi language

Untitled – Marrapinti 1999
synthetic polymer paint on linen
120 × 60 cm (47.2 × 23.6 inches)

PROVENANCE

The Artist, painted at Kintore,
Northern Territory
Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs,
Northern Territory, cat. no. NN990887
A-Space on Cleveland, Sydney,
New South Wales
Private Collection, Sydney,
New South Wales
Australian Aboriginal Art, Christies,
Melbourne, Victoria, 30 August 2005,
lot 9
Private Collection, acquired from
the above
Aboriginal and Oceanic Art,
Sotheby's, Sydney, New South
Wales, 25 November 2007, lot 58
Corporate Collection, Sydney,
New South Wales, acquired from
the above
Australian & International Art,
Gibson's Auctioneers & Valuers,
Melbourne, Victoria, 16 April 2023,
lot 174
Private Collection, Melbourne,
Victoria, acquired from the above

AUD 28,000

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. As a young girl, Naata travelled around the Country with her family, traversing Tingarri Dreaming routes that meet and cross through the Pollock Hills. She continued travelling throughout this vast region until, decades later, in 1963, she encountered a Northern Territory Welfare Branch patrol. These patrols aimed to assess how many Aboriginal people still lived in the desert, and encouraged them to move to settlements like Haasts Bluff and Papunya. The following year, she and her extended family arrived in Papunya, having accompanied a later patrol on the long journey east. After a brief stay in Docker River, Naata joined her family to settle in Walungurru (Kintore) following its establishment in 1981.

These travels would authorise Naata's cultural responsibilities to specific sites: Wala Wala, Ngaripungkunya and the Kanaputa ancestral women's travelling sites of Marrapinti rockhole, Wirrulnga rockhole and soakages east of Kiwirrkurra, as well as Ngaminya rockhole, Wanku, and Piti Kutjarra soakages. Celebrated as an instinctive painter, she depicted the spiritual sites of her desert homeland with a blend of cultural authority, artistic spontaneity, conviction and idiosyncrasy. By expressing the feminine aspect of Indigenous cultural life, she created a distinctive iconography of armlets, grids and mollusc-like forms submerged in striking layers of mottled colour, illustrating the topographies shaped by ancestral travels and events across her Country.



NAATA NUNGURRAYI

c. 1932 – 2021
Pintupi language
Untitled – Marrapinti 1999
synthetic polymer paint on linen
153 × 91 cm (60.2 × 35.8 inches)

PROVENANCE

The Artist, painted at Kintore,
Northern Territory
Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs,
Northern Territory, cat. no. NN9904111
Utopia Art, Sydney, New South Wales
Private Collection, New South
Wales, acquired from the above
Private Collection, acquired from
the above with the assistance
of Tim Klingender Fine Arts,
Sydney, New South Wales
Aboriginal Art, Sotheby's,
New York, 20 May 2025, lot 30
Private Collection, acquired
from the above
AUD 55,000



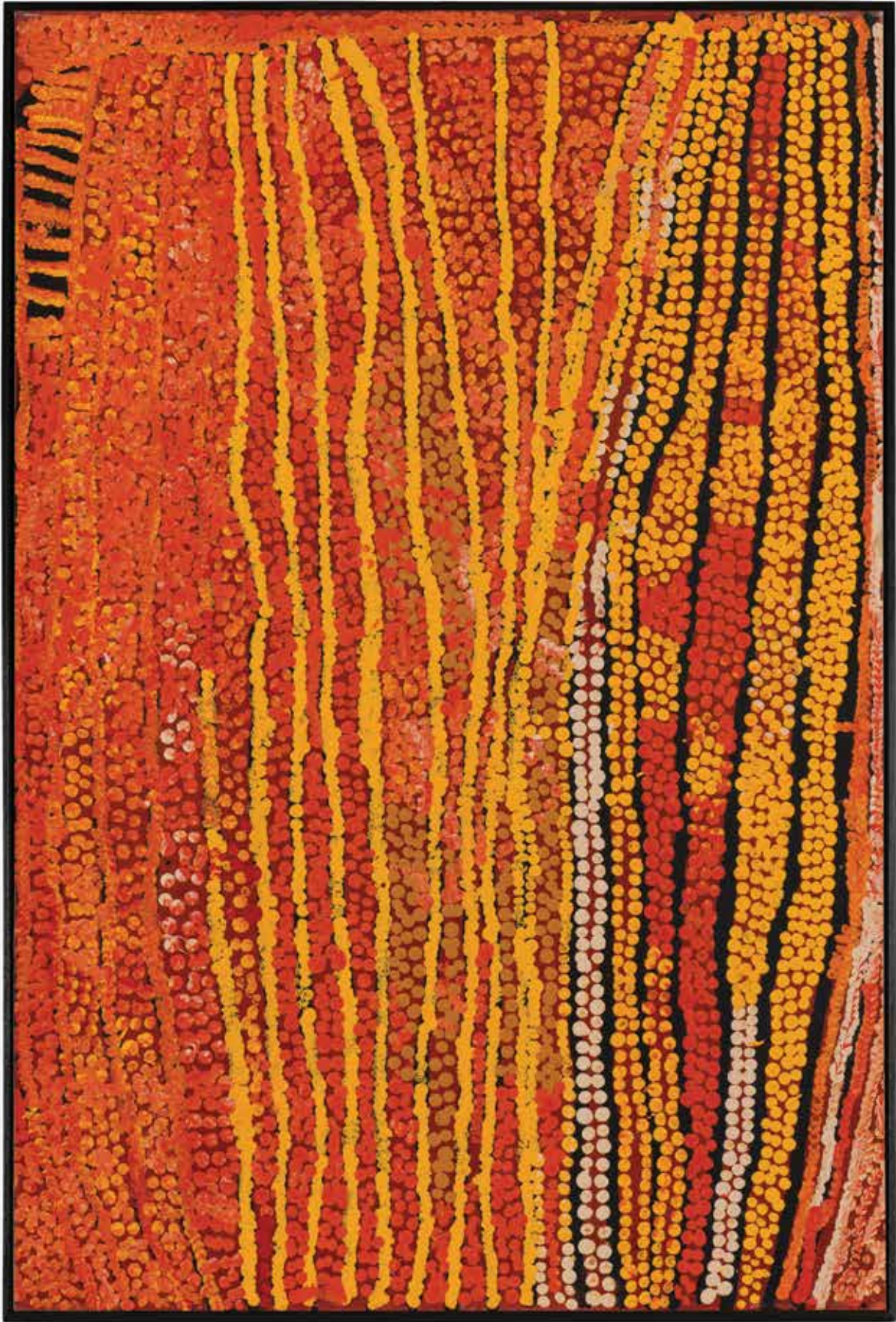
NAATA NUNGURRAYI

c. 1932 – 2021
Pintupi language

Untitled – Wirrunga 2004
synthetic polymer paint on linen
91 × 61 cm (35.8 × 24 inches)

PROVENANCE

The Artist, painted at Kintore,
Northern Territory
Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs,
Northern Territory,
cat. no. NN0403148
Private Collection, Northern
Territory, acquired from the above
AUD 22,000



MAKINTI NAPANANGKA AM
c. 1922 – 2011
Pintupi and Ngaanyatjarra languages

Untitled – Lupulnga 2003
synthetic polymer paint on linen
122 × 91 cm (48 × 35.8 inches)

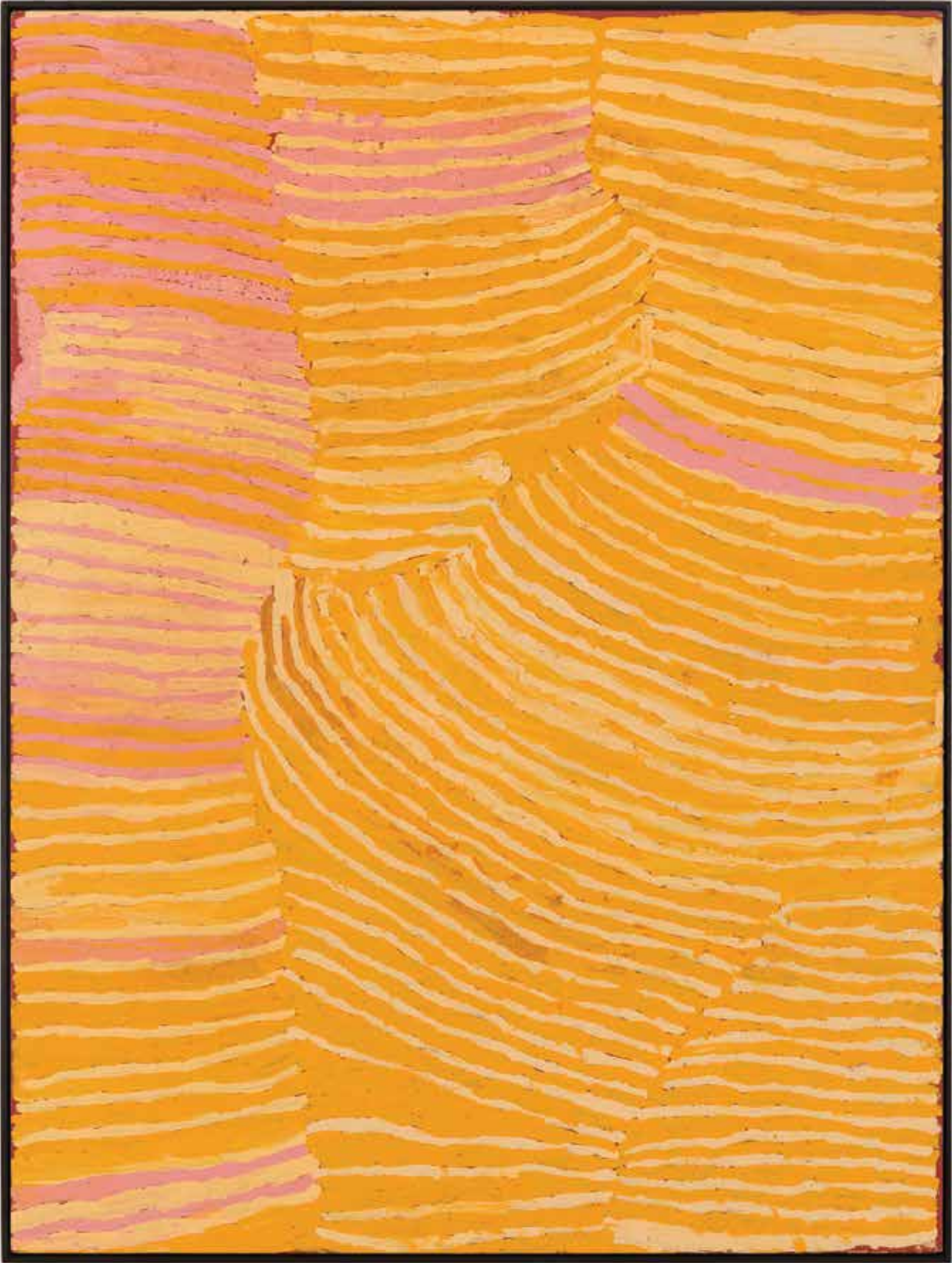
PROVENANCE
The Artist, painted at Kintore,
Northern Territory
Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs,
Northern Territory,
cat. no. MN0309180
Private Collection, South Australia,
acquired from the above

AUD 40,000

Makinti Napanangka (c.1922–2011) was born south-west of Walungurru at Mangarri, near Tjukurla, in the Lake MacDonald area. After walking off her Country in her twenties to join other families at the settlements of Haasts Bluff and Papunya, Makinti retained her connection to her Country, expressing its image in acrylic paint some fifty years later. If women’s painting is defined by its tactile qualities, then Makinti Napanangka is recognised as one of the greatest visionaries. Ironically, the origin of her style was formed while her sight was impaired by cataracts, which remains a leading cause of blindness among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

By the mid 1990s, Makinti’s visual experience of the world was a blurry haze segmented into distinguishable areas of light and dark. This is an important element in understanding her early paintings and the development of her style after her sight was restored in 2000. From 1996 until 2000, Makinti painted almost daily despite her limited vision. Led by her daughters to the Papunya

Tula art centre, she would complete modest-sized canvases using her brush, fingers and hands. Through her unwavering focus on her subjects during this period, Makinti established a deep relationship with her medium, guided by touch and the application of multiple bright colours to create a dialogue on canvas that she could control. After her eyesight was restored in 2000, delicate, nuanced works emerged that depicted the movement of the eternal dance of the ancestral women on her Country. Fanned lines in her two primary colours, yellow and white, represent the blossoming skirts of the dancing women, and her light-filled canvases elevated her as one of the region’s most influential artists. In 2008, Napanangka won the overall prize at the 25th Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, and after her passing in 2011, she was posthumously awarded the Member of the Order of Australia, for ‘service to the arts as a contemporary Indigenous Artist, to women painters of the Western Desert Art movement, and to the community of the Northern Territory’.



MAKINTI NAPANANGKA AM

c. 1922 – 2011

Pintupi and Ngaanyatjarra languages

Untitled – Lupulnga 2004

synthetic polymer paint on linen

107 × 91 cm (42 × 35.8 inches)

PROVENANCE

The Artist, painted at Kintore,

Northern Territory

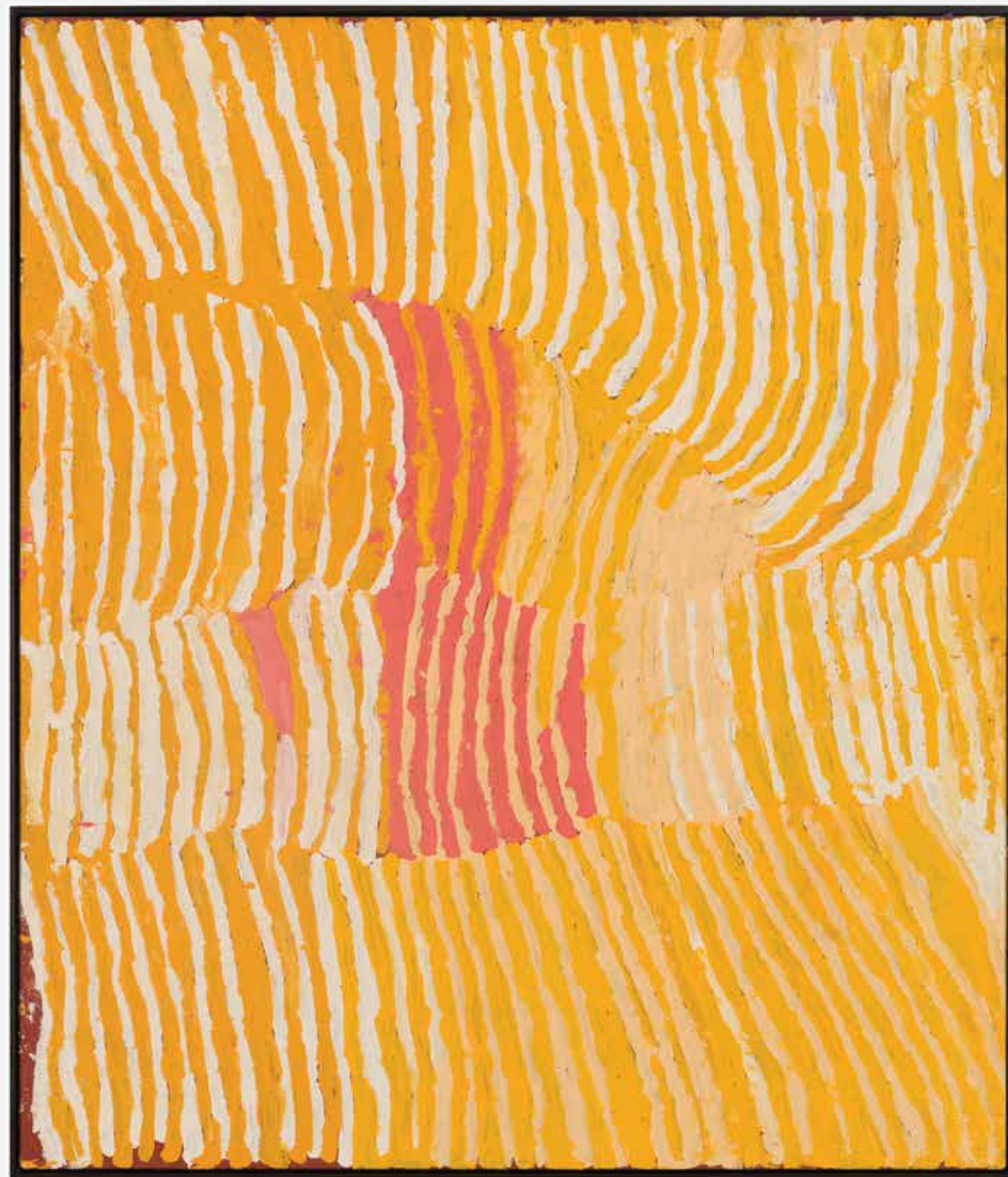
Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs,

Northern Territory, cat. no. MN0411159

Private Collection, South Australia,

acquired from the above

AUD 32,000



MAKINTI NAPANANGKA AM

c. 1922 – 2011

Pintupi and Ngaanyatjarra languages

Untitled – Lupulnga 2009

synthetic polymer paint on linen

91 × 61 cm (35.8 × 24 inches)

PROVENANCEThe Artist, painted at Kintore,
Northern TerritoryPapunya Tula Artists,
Alice Springs, Northern Territory,
cat. no. MN0912026Private Collection, Alice Springs,
Northern Territory, acquired from
the above

AUD 22,000



WALANGKURA NAPANANGKA

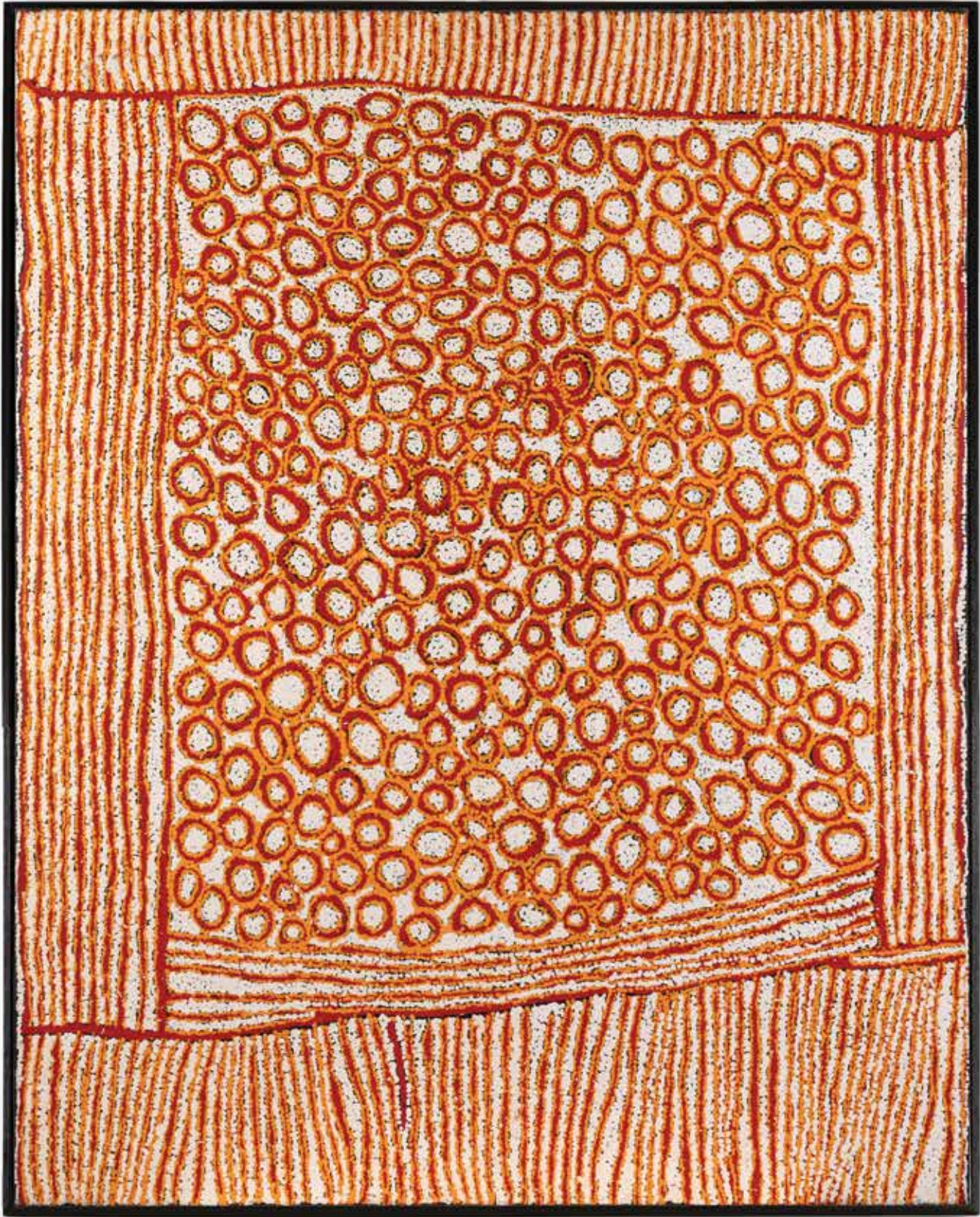
c. 1944 – 2015
Pintupi language
*Untitled – Old Woman
Dreaming* 2002
synthetic polymer paint on linen
152 × 121 cm (59.8 × 47.6 inches)

PROVENANCE
The Artist, painted at Kintore,
Northern Territory
Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs,
Northern Territory,
cat. no. WN0204079
Private Collection
Aboriginal Art, Lawson~Menzies,
Sydney, New South Wales,
25 June 2004, lot 74A
Private Collection, Queensland,
acquired from the above

AUD 36,000

Walangkura Napanangka was born around 1944 at the site of Tjiturunga, west of Walungurru. While still a teenager, she travelled by foot with her family over hundreds of kilometres from their remote desert home, eventually joining Uta Uta Tjangala’s group as they walked into the settlements of Haasts Bluff and then Papunya. She was the daughter of Rartji Tjapangati, an important custodian of the Country west of Lake MacDonald, and Inyuwa Nampitjinpa, who, like Tatali Nangala, was key to the early women’s movement, passing away just as it was gaining momentum in 1999.

Although Walangkura was not present at the collaborative canvas workshop, she began painting in April 1996, and soon after started exhibiting with Papunya Tula Artists. The energy and confidence of Walangkura’s early paintings reveal an emerging individual style. She became a prominent figure in women’s painting, preferring to tackle large canvases with dynamic, gestural brushwork, yet still densely packing the canvas with intricate geometric linework representing sandhills.



WALANGKURA NAPANANGKA
c. 1944 – 2015
Pintupi language

Untitled – Tjintjintjin 2009
synthetic polymer paint on linen
91 × 61 cm (35.8 × 24 inches)

PROVENANCE
The Artist, painted at Kintore,
Northern Territory
Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs,
Northern Territory,
cat. no. WN0905057
Cross Cultural Art Exchange (CCAЕ),
Darwin, Northern Territory
Private Collection, Melbourne,
Victoria, acquired from
the above in 2009

AUD 8,800



WALANGKURA NAPANANGKA

c. 1938 – 2010
Pintupi language

Untitled – Lupulnga 2005
synthetic polymer paint on linen
122 × 153 cm (48 × 60.2 inches)

PROVENANCE

The Artist, painted at Kintore,
Northern Territory
Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs,
Northern Territory,
cat. no. WN0509094
Private Collection, South Australia,
acquired from the above

AUD 36,000

Born close to Tjukurla, south-east of Walungurru, Walangkura Napanangka travelled to Haasts Bluff with her family when she was a teenager, and later moved to Papunya, where she met and married the artist Uta Uta Tjangala. In doing this she was defying the promise by which she had been given to another man as a young girl, and the punishment she received was harsh, leaving her paralysed from the waist down and reliant on others to move around. Often she was identified as Uta Uta Tjangala’s widow, the devotion between Walangkura Napanangka and her husband forming a tender legacy which weaves through the history of Papunya Tula Artists. Being married to one of the most influential and innovative of the original shareholders of the artists’ company meant that Napanangka was surrounded by the dynamic energy and proliferation of art-making that occurred during

the early days at Papunya. It was only towards the end of the 1990s, almost a decade after her husband’s death, that she finally began painting and joined the spirited female artists at Walungurru.

Napanangka’s paintings of Tjukurla and other sites south of Walungurru often depict the movements of ancestral women as they travel across her birth Country. The influence of her husband, Uta Uta, is reflected in her work, which shares the same palette of reds and oranges and bold compositional style as his. In her work, though, the spiritual and geographical landscape of her Country is portrayed with a characteristic joy, tenderness and intuitive maternal warmth. The sensuously textured, loose dots that flow across her paintings with rhythmic strength and vitality represent Walangkura’s dedication to her Country and her family.



WALANGKURA NAPANANGKA

c. 1938 – 2010
Pintupi language

Untitled – Tjukurla 2006
synthetic polymer paint on linen
91 × 61 cm (35.8 × 24 inches)

PROVENANCE

The Artist, painted at Kintore,
Northern Territory
Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs,
Northern Territory,
cat. no. WN0610074
Harvey Arts Project, Idaho
Private Collection, Melbourne,
Victoria, acquired from
the above in 2009

AUD 8,800



WALANGKURA NAPANANGKA
c. 1938 – 2010
Pintupi language

Untitled – Tjukurla 2006
synthetic polymer paint on linen
152 × 183 cm (59.8 × 72 inches)

PROVENANCE
The Artist, painted at Kintore,
Northern Territory
Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs,
Northern Territory,
cat. no. WN0607072
Private Collection
D'Lan Contemporary,
Melbourne, Victoria
Private Collection, Brisbane,
Queensland, acquired from
the above in 2020

EXHIBITED
*The 23rd Telstra National
Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander Art Awards (Telstra
NATSIAA)*, Museum and Art Gallery
of the Northern Territory, Darwin,
Northern Territory, August 2006

AUD 65,000



KAWAYI NAMPITJINPA

c. 1938 – 2014
Warlpiri and Pintupi languages

Untitled – Pinpirnrnga 2010
synthetic polymer paint on linen
122 × 107 cm (48 × 42.1 inches)

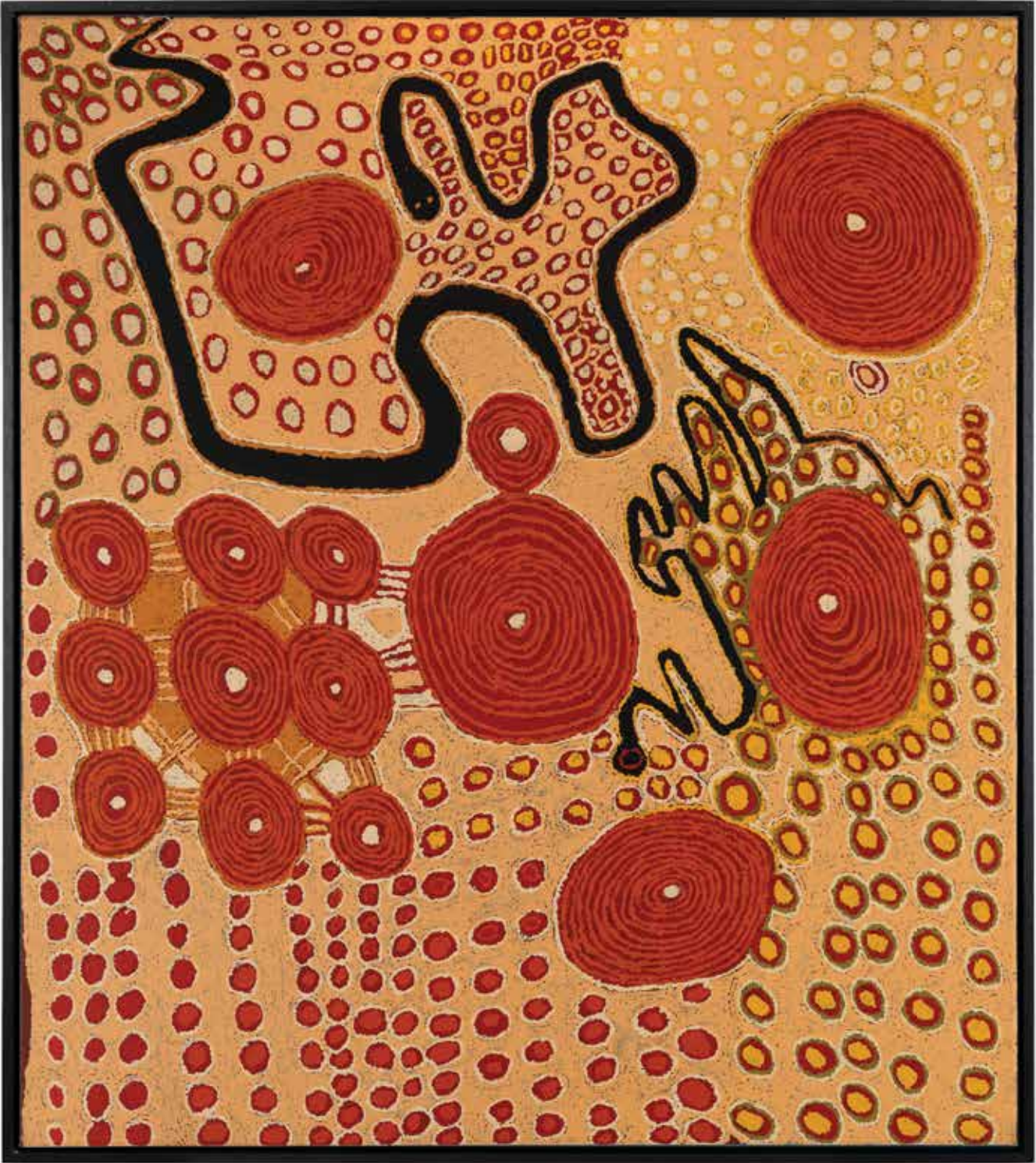
PROVENANCE

The Artist, painted at Kintore,
Northern Territory
Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs,
Northern Territory,
cat. no. KN1007074
Cross Cultural Art Exchange (CCAIE),
Darwin, Northern Territory
Private Collection, Melbourne,
Victoria, acquired from
the above in 2011

AUD 18,000

Kawayi Nampitjinpa was born west of Walungurru and grew up walking around Warlpiri lands north-west of Mount Doreen and Yuendumu with her parents, grandmother and sisters. She attended the mission school at Yuendumu and moved to Walungurru when it was first established. She married artist and well-known ngangkari Benny Tjapaltjarri, who worked at the Pintupi Homelands Health Service clinic for many years. Nampitjinpa’s assertiveness as a community matriarch is reflected in her paintings, where her depictions of Wanampi (Water Snake) Dreaming around the rockhole Pinpirnrnga have a direct graphic quality.

Kawayi painted intermittently from the late 1980s, then started painting regularly after her husband passed away in 2003. She truly found her stride after 2010, when she began incorporating complex elements into beautifully textured layers of paint. In 2011, Nampitjinpa was a finalist in the 28th Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, at which her striking painting attracted attention as one of the strongest works in the exhibition. The following year, her painting was featured as the lead work in the Papunya Tula Artists’ fortieth anniversary celebrations in Sun Valley, Idaho.



KAWAYI NAMPITJINPA

c. 1938 – 2014

Warlpiri and Pintupi languages

Untitled – Pinpirnnga 2011

synthetic polymer paint on linen

122 × 61 cm (48 × 24 inches)

PROVENANCE

The Artist, painted at Kintore,

Northern Territory

Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs,

Northern Territory, cat. no. KN1112035

Private Collection, Melbourne,

Victoria, acquired from

the above in 2012

AUD 12,000



WINTJIYA NAPALTJARRI

c. 1932 – 2014
Pintupi language

Untitled – Women's Ceremonies at Watanuma 2010
synthetic polymer on linen
122 × 137 cm (48 × 53.9 inches)

PROVENANCE

The Artist, painted at Kintore, Northern Territory
Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs, Northern Territory,
cat. no. WN1001024
Debra and Dennis Scholl Collection, Miami Beach, Florida

LITERATURE

Henry F. Skeritt (ed.), *Marking the Infinite: Contemporary Women Artists from Aboriginal Australia*, Nevada Museum of Art, Reno, and DelMonico Books-Prestel, Munich-London-New York, 2019, p. 60

EXHIBITED

Marking the Infinite: Contemporary Women Artists from Aboriginal Australia, Newcomb Art Museum, Tulane University, New Orleans, 7 September 2016 – 1 January 2017; Patricia and Phillip Frost Art Museum, Florida International University, Miami, 28 January – 7 May 2017; Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art, Scottsdale, Arizona, 23 September 2017 – 21 January 2018; Nevada Museum of Art, Reno, 17 February – 13 May 2018; The Phillips Collection, Washington, DC, 2 June – 9 September 2018; Museum of Anthropology, The University of British Colombia, Vancouver, 1 November 2018 – 24 February 2019

AUD 28,000

Wintjiya Napaltjarri was born in the early 1930s near the swamp at Malparingya, to the north-west of Walungurru. She lived a nomadic existence until, in her twenties, she joined the migration of Western Desert Pintupi people to Haasts Bluff and later Papunya. In both of these places, Napaltjarri witnessed the production of art, first in Haasts Bluff, where people were painting with watercolour on paper, and then later as the birth of the Western Desert art movement unfolded at Papunya. When the Kintore Women's Centre was built, she made her first paintings as one of a small group of senior women who produced a set of striking murals on its walls in 1992, and then, in 1994, she painted as part of the Minyma Tjukurrpa Kintore/Haasts Bluff Canvas Project held behind the Walungurru women's mountain that winter.

Heavily laden with paint, Napaltjarri's paintings are nearly sculptural in their weight and thickness, a quality for which they stand out among those of her contemporaries. They reveal her meticulous dedication to building up layers of dotting that surround and almost smother the chorus of floating forms that refer to women's ceremonial and everyday lives around the claypan site of Watanuma.



WINTJIYA NAPALTJARRI

c. 1932 – 2014
Pintupi language
Untitled – Women's Ceremonies at Watanuma 2011
synthetic polymer paint on linen
122 × 122 cm (48 × 48 inches)

PROVENANCE

The Artist, painted at Kintore, Northern Territory
Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs, Northern Territory, cat. no. WN1101108
Debra and Dennis Scholl Collection, Miami Beach, Florida

LITERATURE

Henry F. Skerritt (ed.), *Marking the Infinite: Contemporary Women Artists from Aboriginal Australia*, Nevada Museum of Art, Reno, and DelMonico Books-Prestel, Munich-London-New York, 2019, p. 62

EXHIBITED

Marking the Infinite: Contemporary Women Artists from Aboriginal Australia, Newcomb Art Museum, Tulane University, New Orleans, 7 September 2016 – 1 January 2017; Patricia and Phillip Frost Art Museum, Florida International University, Miami, 28 January – 7 May 2017; Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art, Scottsdale, Arizona, 23 September 2017 – 21 January 2018; Nevada Museum of Art, Reno, 17 February – 13 May 2018; The Phillips Collection, Washington, DC, 2 June – 9 September 2018; Museum of Anthropology, The University of British Columbia, Vancouver, 1 November 2018 – 24 February 2019

AUD 25,000





KIWIRRKURRA

In 1996, a small group of Pintupi women began painting at the small community of Kiwirrkurra in Western Australia. Since its establishment in 1983, Kiwirrkurra had been home to Pintupi families who had relocated from the outstations west of Papunya. This included several senior men who had already gained significant recognition as artists. Many of the women had previously assisted their aging husbands in the completion of artworks by dotting areas of the paintings' backgrounds. This collaborative process – evident since the early period of the movement – was instrumental in the women's artistic development and laid the foundations for their own practice.

This coincided with the activity at nearby Walungurru (Kintore), where a group of senior women began their painting careers. In a riot of exuberant colour and gestural line, artists such as Makinti Napanangka and Naata Nungurrayi reinterpreted familiar desert iconography to defy popular expectations of Aboriginal desert painting. The artistic practice in Kiwirrkurra, however – where the demographic was significantly younger – was very different. In the absence of senior women, who would typically have provided cultural leadership in this new cultural activity, a creative environment emerged that was free of expectation and open to the prevailing artistic legacy established by the men. This dynamic inspired the women to adopt the subtlety, tone and compositional structure of the male 'so-called' minimalists.

Taking cues from their husbands, brothers, fathers and uncles, artists including Yukultji Napangati and Doreen Reid Nakamarra re-aligned their aesthetic to a practice centred in place, where once women's practice had been presumed to be defined by gender.

Wilkinson (Lake Mackay)
Photographer: Matt Frost
courtesy of Papunya Tula Artists Pty Ltd

YINARUPA NANGALA

born c. 1961
Pintupi language

Untitled – Mukula 2008
synthetic polymer paint on linen
152 × 122 cm (59.8 × 48 inches)

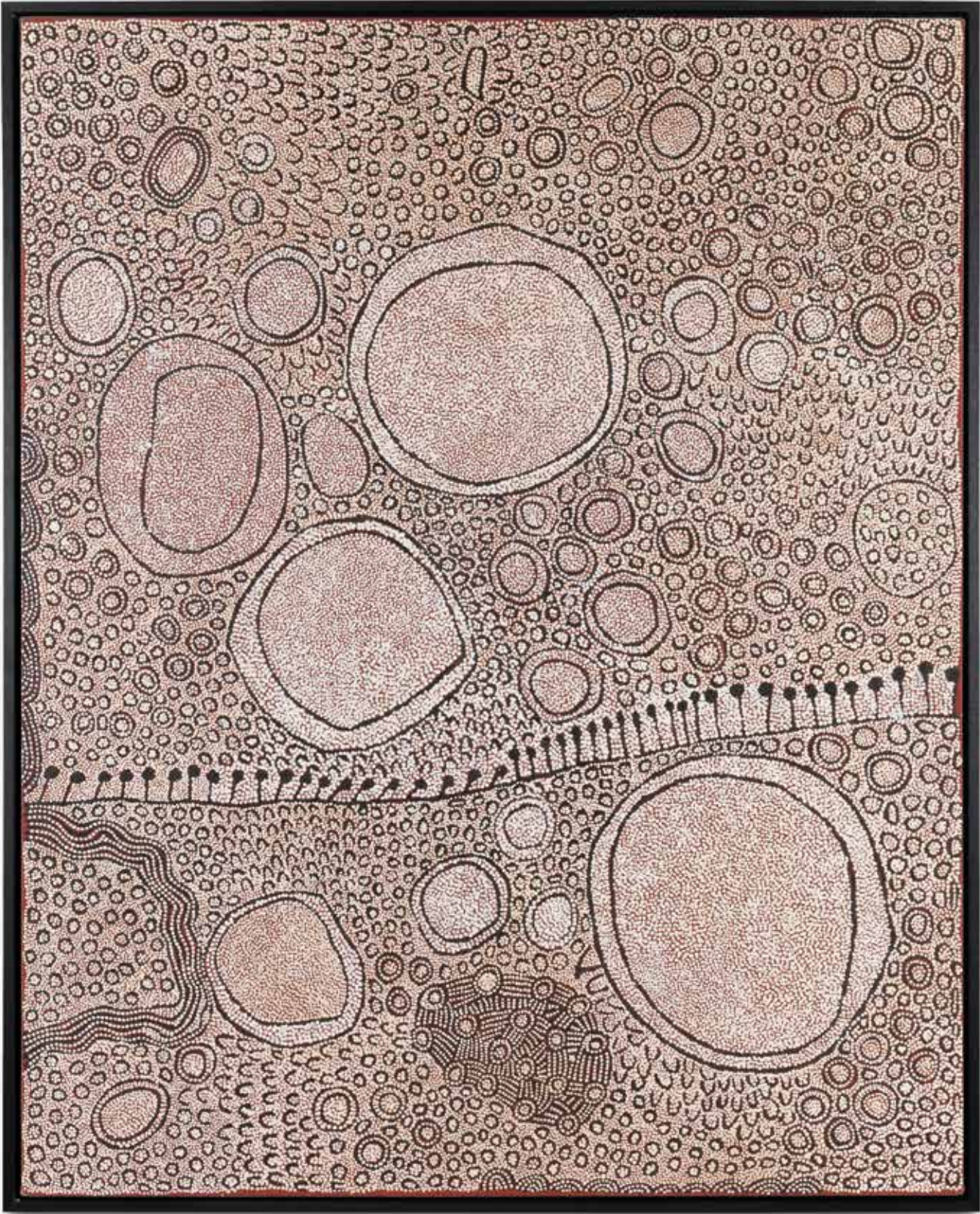
PROVENANCE

The Artist, created at Kiwirrkurra,
Western Australia
Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs,
Northern Territory,
cat no. YN0809025
Cross Cultural Art Exchange (CCAЕ),
Darwin, Northern Territory
Private Collection, Darwin, Northern
Territory, acquired from the above

AUD 35,000

Yinarupa Nangala and her family were encountered by a Welfare Branch patrol at Wutungu rockhole in 1963, during the Northern Territory Administration’s patrols into the Gibson and Great Sandy Deserts from 1957. Yinarupa became the third wife of the artist Yala Yala Gibbs Tjungurrayi and joined the move back to Pintupi Country in the early 1980s, living first at Walungurru and then settling at Kiwirrkurra in the mid 1980s.

Yinarupa was among the first women to paint at Kiwirrkurra in 1996. Her monochromatic canvases intricately depict the travels of the Kanaputa women and the sites of Yunala, Wala Wala and Mukularrangu to the west of the community. The fine brushwork extending across her large-scale paintings evokes the expansive yet abundant desert country. In 2009, Yinarupa won the General Painting Award at the 26th Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards; and was a finalist of the Wynne Prize, 2014; Alice Art Prize, 2010; Western Australian Art Prize, 2009, 2010; and TogArt Contemporary Art Award, 2008.



YINARUPA NANGALA

born c. 1961
Pintupi language
Untitled – Mukula 2008
synthetic polymer paint on linen
183 × 242.5 cm (72 × 95.4 inches)

PROVENANCE

The Artist, painted at Alice Springs,
Northern Territory
Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs,
Northern Territory,
cat. no. YN0803209
Private Collection, Melbourne,
Victoria, acquired from
the above in 2008
Lennox St. Gallery,
Melbourne, Victoria
Private Collection, Melbourne,
Victoria, acquired from the above

EXHIBITED

*Indigenous Masterworks from
the Papunya Tula, Utopia &
Tiwi Islands Artists*, Lennox St.
Gallery, Melbourne, Victoria,
12 June – 7 July 2024
*The 26th Telstra National
Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander Art Awards (Telstra
NATSIAA)*, Museum and Art
Gallery of the Northern Territory,
Darwin, August 2009 – Winner
of the General Painting Award

AUD 120,000



DOREEN REID NAKAMARRA
c. 1955 – 2009
Pintupi and Ngaatjatjarra languages

Untitled – Marrapinti 2008
synthetic polymer paint on linen
183 × 244 cm (72 × 96 inches)

PROVENANCE
The Artist, painted at Kiwirrkurra,
Western Australia
Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs,
Northern Territory,
cat. no. DR0802033
Private Collection, Melbourne,
Victoria, acquired from
the above in 2008

EXHIBITED
*The 25th Telstra National Aboriginal
and Torres Strait Islander Art
Awards (Telstra NATSIAA)*, Museum
and Art Gallery of the Northern
Territory, Darwin, August 2008 –
Winner of the General Painting Award

AUD 420,000

For a time after her birth east of the Warburton Mission in the mid 1950s, Doreen Reid Nakamarra and her family remained living ‘in the bush’. They eventually transitioned into the mission when Nakamarra was still a young girl. Later, in the early 1960s, her large family group walked many hundreds of kilometres north to the government settlement of Papunya. After Nakamarra's first husband died, she moved to Kiwirrkurra, where she married George Tjampu Tjapaltjarri, a traditional man from the community.

Before starting her career as an artist in 1999, Nakamarra helped her aging husband finish the backgrounds of his paintings. Just before he passed away in 2005, Tjampu insisted she paint the landscape around Kiwirrkurra instead of the ancestral lands of her people, the Ngaatjatjarra, in the south. Inspired by this remarkable request, Nakamarra began creating bold paintings of the key sites across the region, driven

by her wish ‘for white fellas to see that country like I do’. Her best work, with vibrating chevrons mixed with fine rows of dots, evokes the rise and fall of sandhills shimmering in the desert heat.

When Nakamarra tragically passed away in 2009, she was one of Australia’s most successful artists. In 2008, she won the General Painting Award at the 25th Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards. She also exhibited in *Culture Warriors: National Indigenous Art Triennial* at the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, ACT, in 2007, *Revolutions – Forms That Turn* at the Biennale of Sydney in 2008, and at the Moscow Biennale of Contemporary Art in 2009. She travelled to New York City in 2009, where she was the star of the *Nganana Tjungurringanyi Tjukurrpa Nintintjakitja – We Are Here Sharing Our Dreaming* exhibition. She also exhibited posthumously at *dOCUMENTA13* in Kassel, Germany, in 2013.



DOREEN REID NAKAMARRA
c. 1955 – 2009
Pintupi and Ngaatjatjarra languages

Untitled – Marrapinti 2009
synthetic polymer paint on linen
122 x 137 cm (48 x 53.9 inches)

PROVENANCE
The Artist, painted at Kiwirrkurra,
Western Australia
Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs,
Northern Territory,
cat. no. DR0907092
Private Collection, Melbourne,
Victoria, acquired from
the above in 2012

AUD 180,000



YUKULTJI NAPANGATI

born c. 1971
Pintupi language

Untitled – Marrapinti 2012
synthetic polymer paint on linen
183 × 153 cm (72 × 60.2 inches)

PROVENANCE

The Artist, painted at Kiwirrkurra,
Western Australia
Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs,
Northern Territory, cat. no. YN1208104
Private Collection, Melbourne,
Victoria, acquired from
the above in 2012

AUD 96,000

Yukultji Napangati was born near Wilkinkarra (Lake Mackay) in the Western Desert. She moved to Kiwirrkurra in 1984, when she was about fourteen years old. Before that, she and eight family members continued to live independently on their Country, avoiding Welfare patrols and choosing not to engage with the white settlements that were emptying the deserts of people. A skilled hunter, Napangati grew up attuned to the subtle changes of her Country around the vast sparkling salt lake of her homelands. When she began painting towards the end of 1996, Yukultji drew upon the Dreaming places Malaluka, Yunala, Marrapinti and Ngaminya, where the Kanaputa women travelled and embedded their vitality into the landscape.

Napangati is one of the most revered and prominent Western Desert artists still practising today.

Her extensive high-profile exhibition history in both Australia and internationally began with her inclusion in *Primavera 2005* at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney. Since then, notable exhibitions include the solo show *Yukultji Napangati*, Salon 94, New York, 2019; as well as her participation in group exhibitions including *Desert + Coast: Seven Elder Aboriginal Painters*, Salon 94, New York; *Ever Present: First Peoples Art of Australia*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, ACT; and the landmark exhibition *Marking the Infinite: Contemporary Women Artists from Aboriginal Australia*, 2016–2019, inaugural presentation at the Newcomb Art Museum, Tulane University, New Orleans; and *Desert Painters of Australia*, 2019–2020, Gagosian, Hong Kong, New York and Los Angeles.





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ABOUT

Established in 2016, D’Lan Contemporary presents exceptional modern and contemporary art by leading and emerging First Nations artists at its galleries in Melbourne, Sydney and New York alongside an international program of exhibitions, educational talks and events that celebrate and promote the rich art and culture of Australian First Nations peoples.

ETHICS

D’Lan Contemporary maintains strict ethical practices and is committed to creating a sustainable marketplace for this important segment of Australian art and culture. The gallery contributes 30% of its annual net profits to artists, artist projects and their communities.

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 Scougall – 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

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