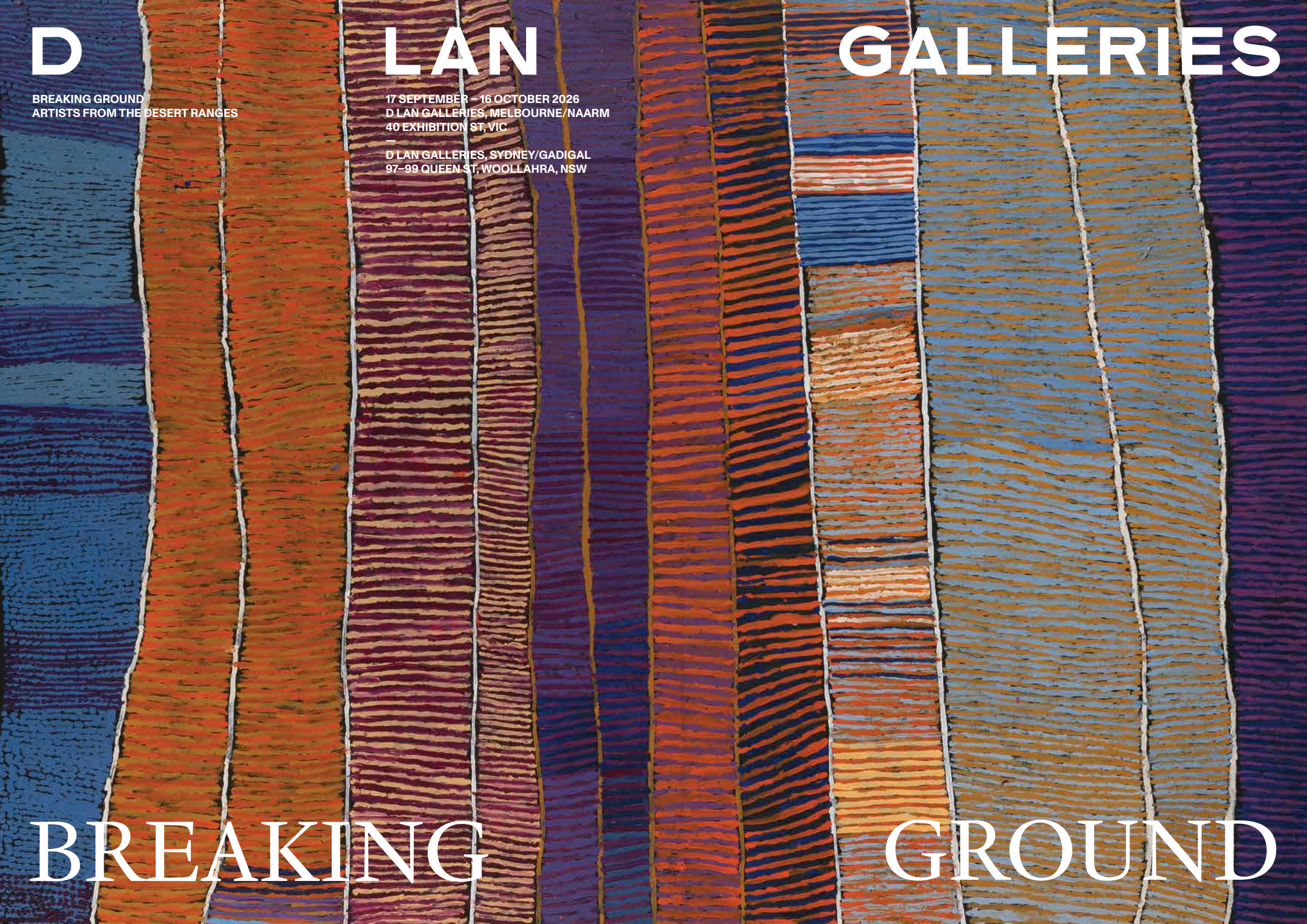


D LAN GALLERIES

BREAKING GROUND
ARTISTS FROM THE DESERT RANGES

17 SEPTEMBER – 16 OCTOBER 2026
D LAN GALLERIES, MELBOURNE/NAARM
40 EXHIBITION ST, VIC
—
D LAN GALLERIES, SYDNEY/GADIGAL
97–99 QUEEN ST, WOOLLAHRA, NSW

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Breaking Ground: Artists from the Desert Ranges began with a single Melbourne collection and an extraordinary concentration of works created between 2006 and 2015. Rather than defining painting from the Aṉangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands through a single movement or style, the exhibition uses this collection as a lens to consider a period of remarkable artistic development across the region.

The artists themselves are at its centre. Connected through Country, kinship and shared cultural foundations, they nevertheless developed highly individual approaches to painting. Across neighbouring communities—and even within the same family across generations—colour, composition, gesture and form could diverge in strikingly different directions. Cultural knowledge was transmitted without the need for visual repetition.

These individual careers developed alongside distinct art centre histories. Some organisations had existed for decades; others were relatively new during the period represented here. Each grew from particular communities and circumstances, and artists themselves played an active role in shaping them. Art centres provided vital infrastructure for materials, documentation, exhibitions, sales and professional relationships, while also supporting cultural activity and intergenerational transmission.

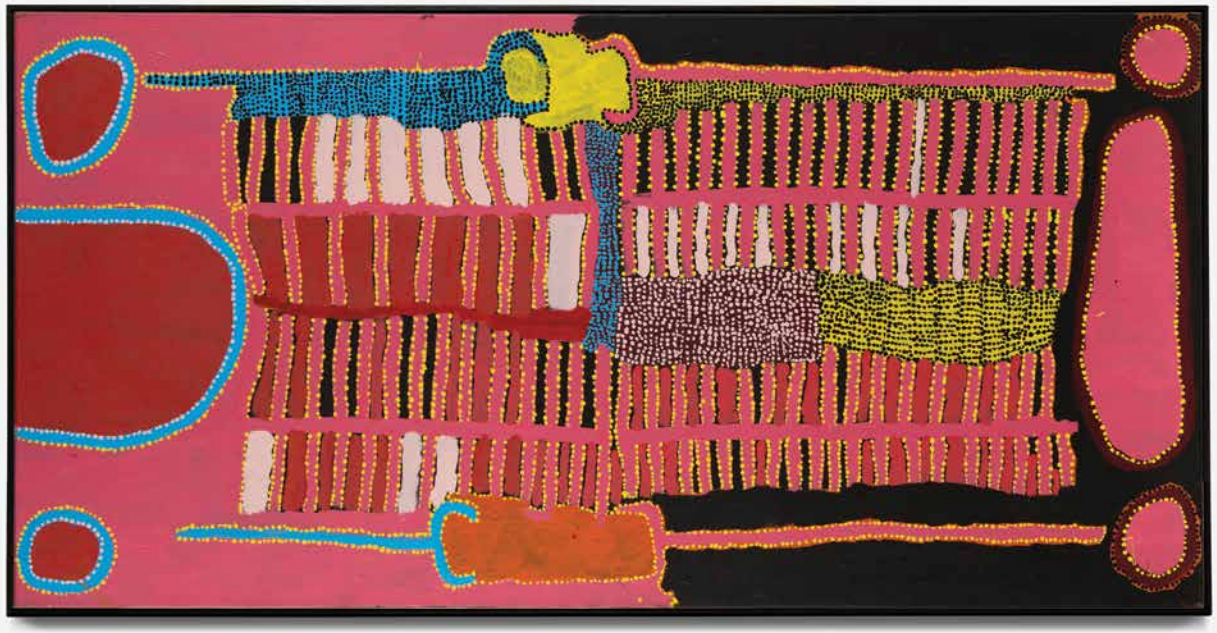
Yet painting was only one part of these artists' lives. Many were also stockmen, shearers, fence workers, makers, healers and cultural leaders, with responsibilities to family, Country, ceremony and community. Their artistic careers belong within these much larger histories.

Breaking Ground therefore asks us to look closely: beyond assumptions of a shared regional style and familiar market hierarchies, towards the individual artists, works and careers that made this period so significant.

Vanessa Merlino
Curator, D Lan Galleries

© Photography: Leslie Haworth

MELBOURNE/NAARM



TIGER YALTANGKI
1973 – 2024
Yankunytjatjara and Pitjantjatjara

Ngura (Country) 2012
synthetic polymer paint on canvas
152 × 76 cm (59.8 × 29.9 inches)

PROVENANCE
The Artist painted at Indulkana, South Australia
Iwantja Arts and Crafts, Indulkana,
South Australia, cat. no. 854-12
ReDot Gallery, Singapore
Private collection, Melbourne, Victoria,
acquired from the above

EXHIBITED
Australian Vision – NAIDOC 2013: A Collection of Fine Indigenous Art from APY Lands,
3 June – 25 July 2013, ReDot Gallery, Singapore

15,000 AUD

Tiger Yaltangki was born in 1973 and began working at Iwantja Arts in 2007. Before painting on canvas, he repeatedly painted his own Akubra hat and boots with acrylic from the art centre. Encouraged by senior Indulkana artists including Alec Baker, he began exhibiting in 2010.

Ngura (Country), 2012, belongs to Yaltangki's first years as a painter. Its dense, dotted landscape is in dialogue with the Country painting of his senior mentors, while already revealing his own appetite for colour and form. The work records an artist developing within the shared visual culture of the Iwantja studio rather than simply waiting to find an individual style.

Yaltangki later became known for crowded, vividly coloured paintings that brought Mamu, rock music and science-fiction figures into a highly personal world. *Ngura* makes the foundations of that mature practice visible: Country, community and the encouragement of senior artists.



TIGER YALTANGKI
1973 – 2024
Yankunytjatjara and Pitjantjatjara

Kalaya Tjina (Emu Footprints) 2010
synthetic polymer paint on canvas
102 × 102 cm (40.2 × 40.2 inches)

PROVENANCE
The Artist, painted at Indulkana, South Australia
Iwantja Arts, Indulkana, South Australia, cat. no. 986-10
Mossenson Galleries, Perth, Western Australia
Private collection, Melbourne, Victoria,
acquired from the above

12,000 AUD



WHISKEY TJUKANGKU
c. 1939 – 2015
Yankunytjatjara language

Punu Trees 2010
synthetic polymer paint on canvas
100 × 90 cm (39.4 × 35.4 inches)

PROVENANCE
The Artist, painted at Indulkana, South Australia
Iwantja Arts and Crafts, Indulkana,
South Australia, cat. no. 860-10
RAFT artspace, Alice Springs, Northern Territory
Private collection, Melbourne, Victoria,
acquired from the above

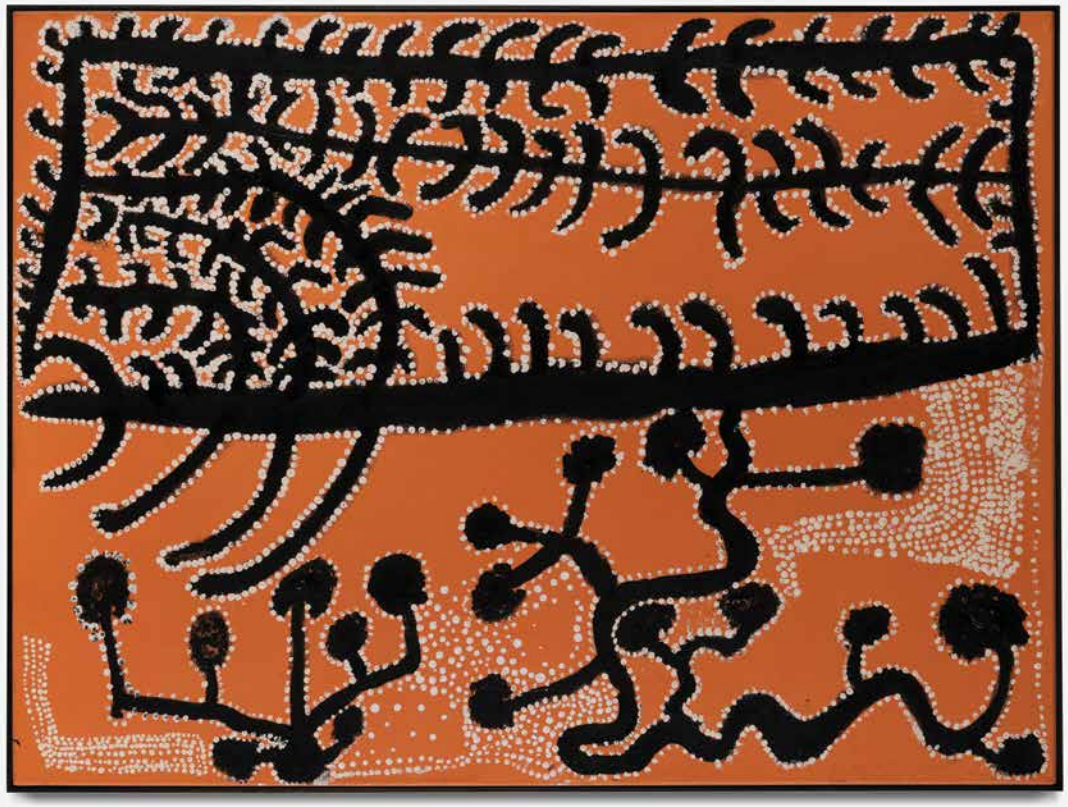
EXHIBITED
Whiskey Tjukangku, 29 April – 21 May 2011,
RAFT artspace, Alice Springs, Northern Territory

12,000 AUD

Whiskey Tjukangku (c. 1939 – 2015) was born in the bush in Yankunytjatjara Country and grew up between Ernabella Mission and De Rose Hill cattle station. After years working as a stockman and drover, he returned closer to his homeland and became a respected leader and ngangkari at Indulkana.

Tjukangku was among the first men to paint at Iwantja Arts and one of the art centre's pioneering artists. *Punu Trees*, 2010, takes its subject directly from Country. 'I am thinking about trees when I am painting,' he explained. 'The tall straight trees are alive and the bent ones are the broken ones on the ground.'

Red and black establish the painting's principal structure, while ochre, cream and white dotting gathers around the trees. The work brings observation and memory together with striking directness, giving living and fallen forms an equally forceful presence.



WHISKEY TJUKANGKU
c. 1939 – 2015
Yankunytjatjara language

Punu Trees 2011
synthetic polymer paint on linen
70 × 95 cm (27.6 × 37.4 inches)

PROVENANCE
The Artist, painted at Indulkana, South Australia
Iwantja Arts and Crafts, Indulkana,
South Australia, cat. no. 98-11
RAFT artspace, Alice Springs, Northern Territory
Private collection, Melbourne, Victoria,
acquired from the above

EXHIBITED
Whiskey Tjukangku, 29 April – 21 May 2011,
RAFT artspace, Alice Springs, Northern Territory

8,800 AUD



WHISKEY TJUKANGKU
c. 1939 – 2015
Yankunytjatjara language

Kapi Ukalinganyi (Water Travelling) 2010
synthetic polymer paint on canvas
51 × 76 cm (20.1 × 29.9 inches)

PROVENANCE
The Artist, painted at Indulkana, South Australia
Iwantja Arts and Crafts, Indulkana, South Australia, cat. no. 906-10
RAFT artspace, Alice Springs, Northern Territory
Private collection, Melbourne, Victoria, acquired from the above

EXHIBITED
Whiskey Tjukangku, 29 April – 21 May 2011, RAFT artspace, Alice Springs, Northern Territory

6,600 AUD



ROBIN KANKAPANKATJA
1930 – 2013
Yankunytjatjara & Pitjantjatjara languages

Tjukula Kutjupa 2010
synthetic polymer paint on linen
118 × 184.5 cm (46.5 × 72.6 inches)

PROVENANCE
The Artist created at Kaltjiti (Fregon), South Australia
Kaltjiti Arts, Kaltjiti, South Australia, cat. no. KALRKA7121P
Private collection, Melbourne, Victoria,
acquired from the above

14,000 AUD

Robin Kankapankatja (1930 – 2013) was born at Walalkara, 65 kilometres south-west of Kaltjiti, in the Aṉangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands. A senior custodian, or ngurarṯitja, for Walalkara, Kankapankatja began painting at Kaltjiti Arts in 2004.

Tjukula Kutjupa, painted in July 2010, brings together multiple sites and Tjukurpa associated with Walalkara and the surrounding Country. Kankapankatja identified many rockholes west of Walalkara. In his account of the painting, the left side depicts Ililya Country and an important women's Tjukurpa; below are women's stories extending towards Port Augusta and two rockholes associated with women's Tjukurpa at Ukarutju in the west. At the top, he identified another women's story, 'a long way from Walalkara wali' – his home Country.

Across the painting, Country is densely interconnected: rockholes, ancestral narratives, food sources and living things are held together within a single expansive field.



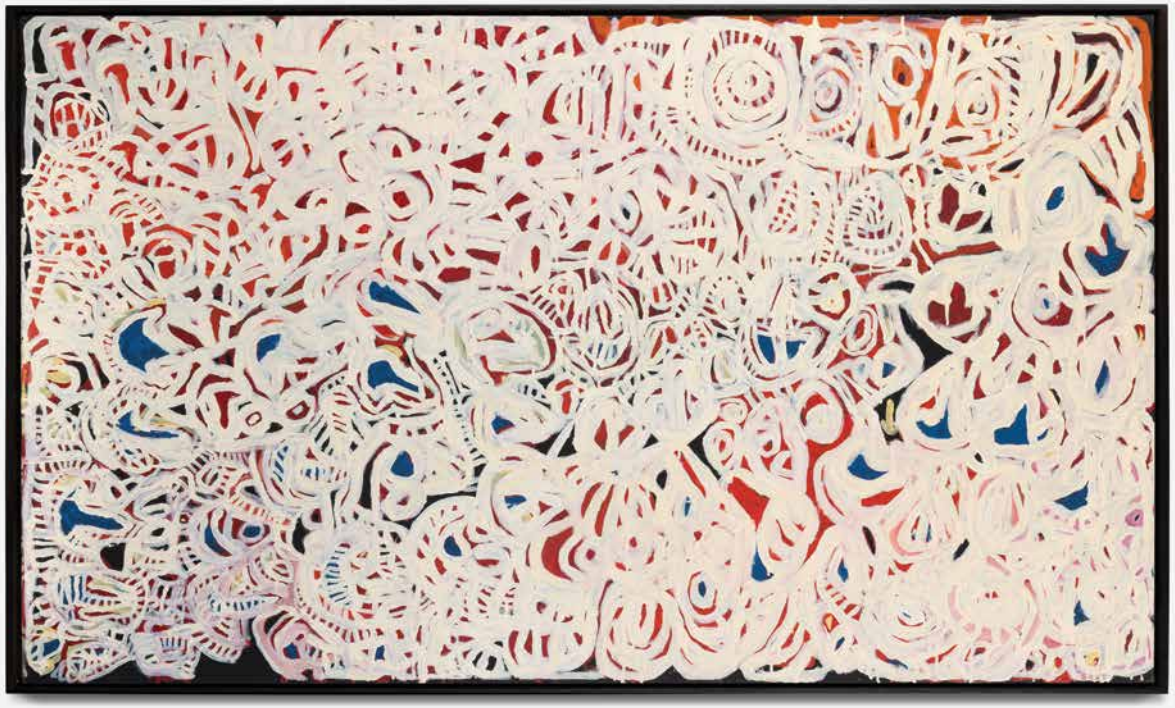
ROBIN KANKAPANKATJA
c. 1930 – 2013
Yankunytjatjara & Pitjantjatjara languages

Walalkara-ku Punu 2010
synthetic polymer paint on linen
200 × 120 cm (78.7 × 47.2 inches)

PROVENANCE
The Artist, painted at Kaltjiti, South Australia
Kaltjiti Arts, South Australia, cat. no. KAL RKA 6751P
RAFT artspace, Alice Springs, Northern Territory
Private collection, Melbourne, Victoria,
acquired from the above

EXHIBITED
APY & NPY Lands Survey, RAFT artspace, Alice Springs,
Northern Territory, 24 April – 22 May 2010

14,000 AUD



DICKIE MINYINTIRI
c. 1915 – 2014
Pitjantjatjara language

Kanyalakutjina 2010
synthetic polymer paint on linen
100 × 170 cm (39.4 × 66.9 inches)

PROVENANCE
The Artist, painted at Pukatja, South Australia
Ernabella Arts, South Australia, cat. no. DM187-10
Aboriginal & Pacific Art, Sydney, New South Wales
Private collection, Melbourne, Victoria,
acquired from the above

LITERATURE
Minyintiri: Life in Layered Time, D'Lan Contemporary, Melbourne, p. 8 (illus.)

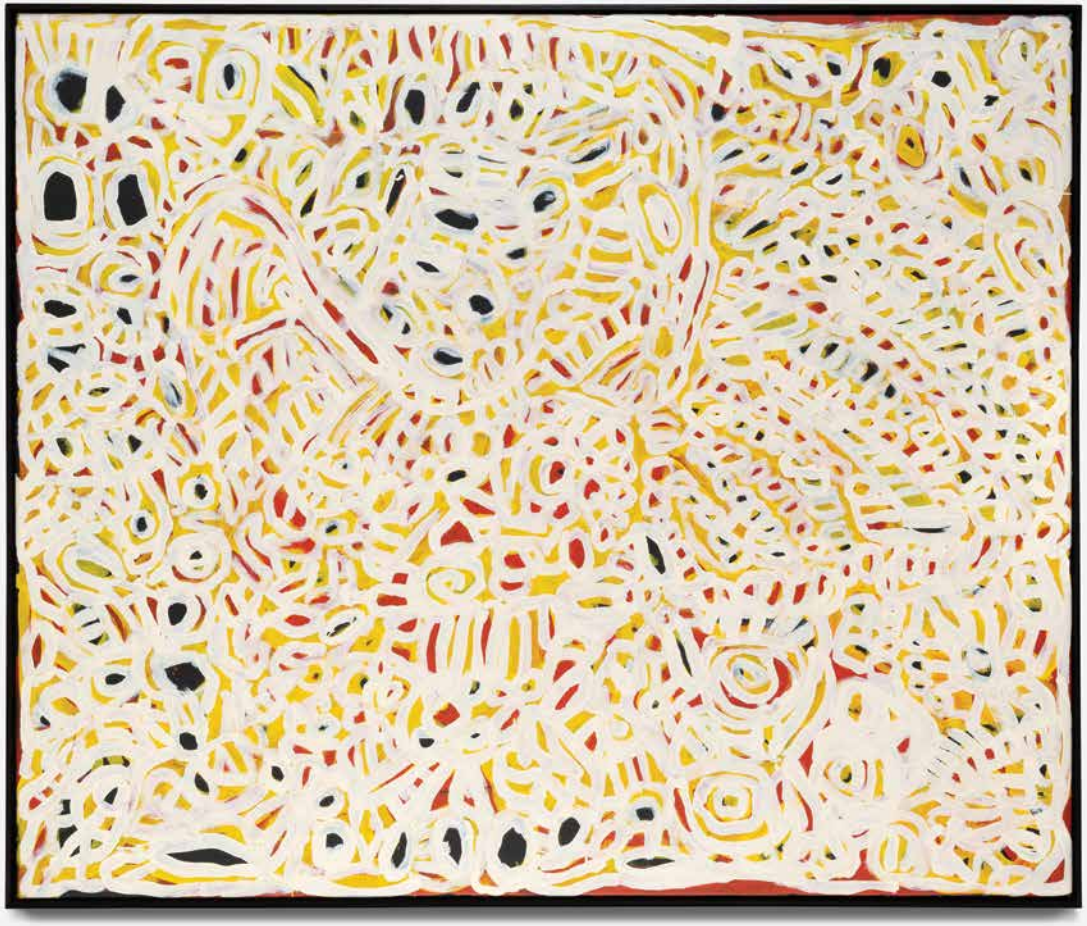
EXHIBITED
Minyintiri: Life in Layered Time, D'Lan Contemporary, Melbourne, 25 March – 8 May 2021

38,000 AUD

Dickie Minyintiri was a Pitjantjatjara ngangkari and cultural custodian, and one of the APY Lands' great painters, though his work emerged remarkably late in an extraordinarily long life. Born in the desert before the establishment of Ernabella Mission in 1937, Minyintiri lived through pre-contact life as a child and became a widely respected knowledge bearer across the region.

Minyintiri joined Ernabella Arts in 2005, already in his eighties. In the nine years before his death in 2014, Minyintiri developed a distinctive style: intense colour grounds overlaid with fine white or cream linework, applied with both brush and punu stick, depicting ancestral beings – rock wallaby, kangaroo, stone curlew and emu – for whom he held responsibility.

Kanyalakutjina, 2010, depicts a hunting Tjukurpa from Minyintiri's own birthplace Country. A related work with the same title won him the NATSIAA the following year.



DICKIE MINYINTIRI
c. 1915 – 2014
Pitjantjatjara language

Watiku Tjukurpa 2012
synthetic polymer paint on linen
100 × 120 cm (39.4 × 47.2 inches)

PROVENANCE
The Artist, painted at Pukatja, South Australia
Ernabella Arts, South Australia, cat. no. 161-12
Private collection, Melbourne, Victoria,
acquired from the above

24,000 AUD



RAY KEN
c. 1940 – 2018
Pitjantjatjara & Yankunytjatjara languages

Kulata Tjuta 2015
synthetic polymer paint on linen
197 × 198 cm (77.6 × 78.0 inches)

PROVENANCE
The Artist, painted at Amata, South Australia
Tjala Arts, South Australia, cat. no. 325-15
RAFT artspace, Alice Springs, Northern Territory
Private collection, Melbourne, Victoria,
acquired from the above

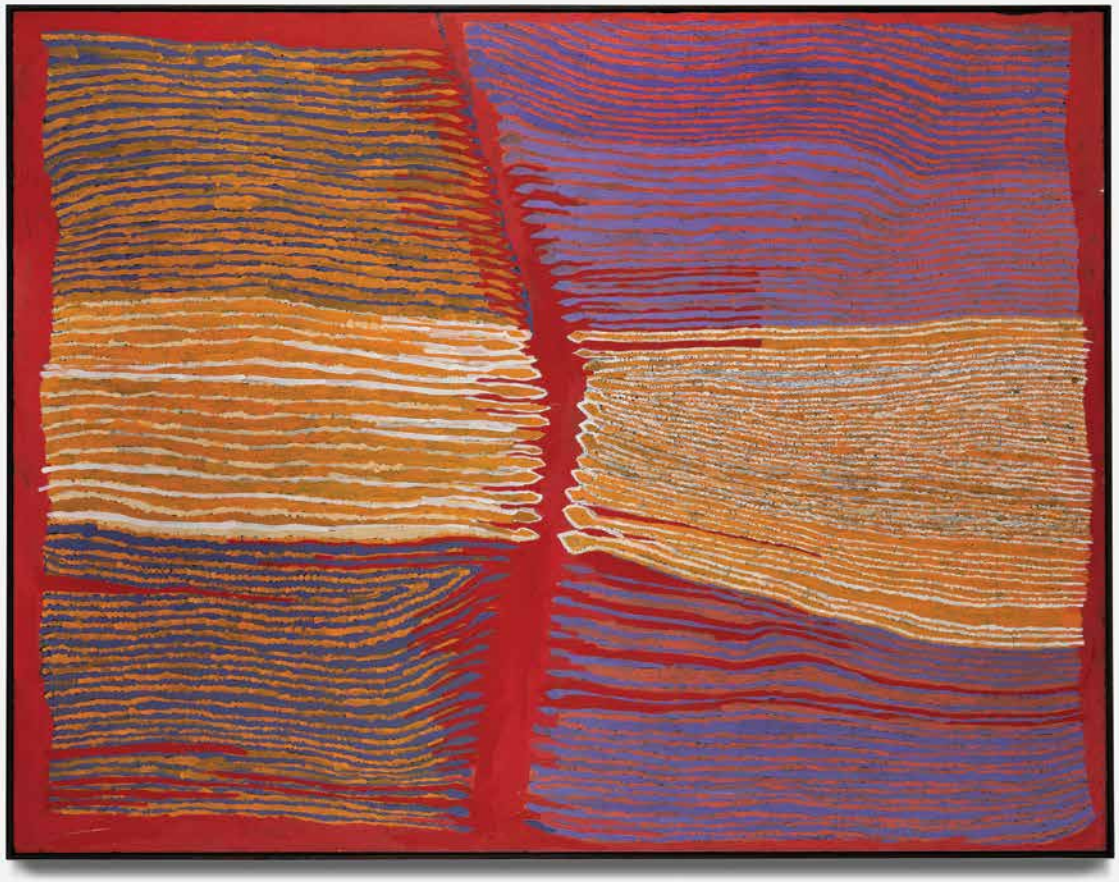
EXHIBITED
Significant APY, RAFT artspace, Alice Springs,
Northern Territory, 18 July – 1 August 2015

24,000 AUD

Ray Ken was a senior Amata lawman and one of the first men to work in the men's painting room established at Minymaku Arts in 2003. Ken's mature practice centred on Tali, the sandhills of Ken's Country, and Kulata Tjuta – many spears.

He held that senior men were responsible for teaching younger generations kulata-making. In 2010 Ken helped establish the Kulata Tjuta Project on that principle, creating an intergenerational framework through which spear-making knowledge could be taught and renewed.

Kulata Tjuta, 2015, brings that teaching practice onto canvas. Its radiating linear structure carries the visual logic of the spears themselves – their form, number and collective force. The painting belongs to the period when the Kulata Tjuta Project was expanding from Amata into a major collaborative initiative across the APY Lands.



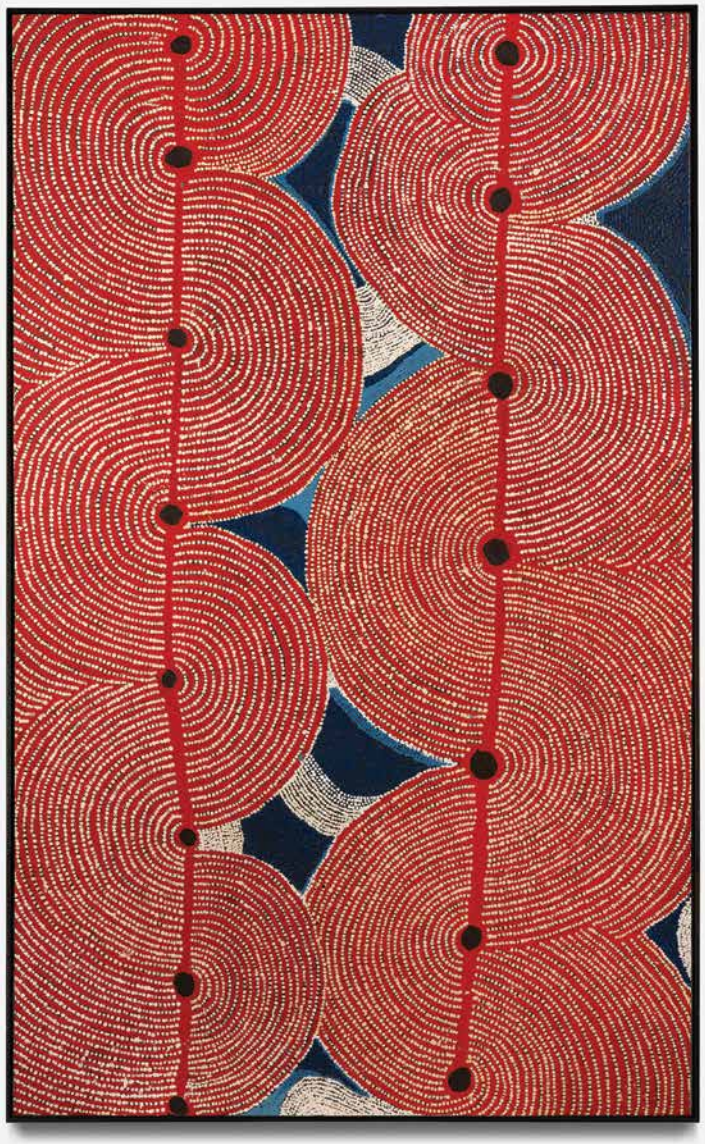
RAY KEN
c. 1940 – 2018
Pitjantjatjara & Yankunytjatjara languages

Kulata Tjuta 2012
synthetic polymer paint on linen
152 × 198 cm (59.8 × 78.0 inches)

PROVENANCE
The Artist, painted at Amata, South Australia
Tjala Arts, South Australia, cat. no. 179-12
Aboriginal & Pacific Arts, Sydney, New South Wales
Private collection, Melbourne, Victoria,
acquired from the above

EXHIBITED
Tjungu Kutju-tu - Together as One: Tjungu Palya and Tjala Arts,
3 – 21 July 2012, Aboriginal and Pacific Art, Sydney,
New South Wales

18,000 AUD



HECTOR BURTON
c. 1937 – 2017
Pitjantjatjara language

Anumara Tjukurpa 2010
synthetic polymer paint on linen
122 × 198 cm (48.0 × 78.0 inches)

PROVENANCE
The Artist, painted at Amata, South Australia
Tjala Arts, South Australia, cat. no. 010-10
Marshall Arts, Adelaide, South Australia
Private collection, Melbourne, Victoria,
acquired from the above

12,000 AUD

Hector Tjupuru Burton (c. 1937 – 2017) was a senior Pitjantjatjara lawman, religious minister and community leader. Among the first senior men to paint at Minymaku Arts, Burton's practice was inseparable from teaching: in later years Burton brought his grandsons into Tjala Arts to pass on Anumara Tjukurpa directly. In 2011 he encouraged young men, mostly his grandsons, into Tjala Arts to teach them Anumara Tjukurpa, painting alongside them as part of an intergenerational exchange.

Anumara Tjukurpa, 2010, sets out two kinship groups converging on one resting place, ngura – Burton's own group from the South, and Burton's uncles, nephews and fathers in the North. The ceremony associated with Anumara had lapsed before Amata men revived it.



MICK WIKILYIRI
b. 1940
Pitjantjatjara language

Mick Working as a Young Fella 2009
synthetic polymer paint on linen
122 × 102 cm (48.0 × 40.2 inches)

PROVENANCE
The Artist, painted at Amata, South Australia
Tjala Arts, Amata, South Australia, cat. no. 416-09
Marshall Arts, Adelaide, South Australia
Private collection, Melbourne, Victoria,
acquired from the above

12,000 AUD

Before painting became central to his practice, Mick Wikilyiri worked as a ringer at Curtin Springs, Timber Creek, Kenmore Park, Kalka and Musgrave Park Station—the property that later became Amata. He was among the first senior men to paint at Minymaku Arts when a men's painting room was established in 2003.

Wikilyiri described his paintings as "maps, biographies and histories", reflecting the way personal experience and ancestral narrative coexist within his representations of Country. *Mick Working as a Young Fella*, 2009, makes this relationship particularly vivid. A horse and bull appear directly within a landscape of rockholes, placing Wikilyiri's own years as a stockman within the Country that shaped both his working life and cultural identity.



MICK WIKILYIRI
b. 1940
Pitjantjatjara language

Ngayuku Ngura – My Country 2012
synthetic polymer paint on linen
199 × 123.5 cm (78.3 × 48.6 inches)

PROVENANCE
The Artist, created at Amata, South Australia
Tjala Arts, South Australia, cat. no. 155-12
Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne, Victoria, cat. no. AK178
Private collection, Melbourne, Victoria,
acquired from the above

EXHIBITED
Punu Ngangatja Palkara Tjarra – The Trees Are The Strong Fence,
Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne, 27 June – 27 July 2012

16,000 AUD



MICK WIKILYIRI
b. 1940
Pitjantjatjara language

Tjala Tjukurpa 2014
synthetic polymer paint on linen
122 × 101.5 cm (48.0 × 40.0 inches)

PROVENANCE
The Artist, painted at Amata, South Australia
Tjala Arts, South Australia, cat. no. 38-14
Outstation Gallery, Darwin, Northern Territory
Private collection, Melbourne, Victoria,
acquired from the above

12,000 AUD



TIGER PALPATJA
c. 1920 – 2012
Pitjantjatjara language

Mai Tjuta – Plenty Food 2006
synthetic polymer paint on linen
152 × 101 cm (59.8 × 39.8 inches)

PROVENANCE
The Artist, painted at Amata, South Australia
Tjala Arts, Amata, South Australia, cat. no. 943-06
Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne, Victoria
Private collection, Melbourne, Victoria,
acquired from the above

22,000 AUD

Tiger Palpatja began painting at Amata in 2004, when he was already in his eighties. A respected ngangkari and accomplished maker of punu, particularly spears, Palpatja brought a lifetime of cultural knowledge and making to his emerging practice at the art centre.

Mai Tjuta – Plenty Food, 2006, belongs to this remarkably concentrated early period. Palpatja returned to this subject in several works from these years, with related Tjala Arts documentation connecting the imagery to food, water and Country. Saturated colour, open composition and strongly articulated forms reveal the vigorous and highly individual approach that distinguished his work.

Recognition came quickly. Palpatja was selected as a NATSIAA finalist in 2005 and again in 2006.



KEITH STEVENS
b.1940
Pitjantjatjara language

Wati Mamu 2009
synthetic polymer paint on linen
197 × 122 cm (77.6 × 48.0 inches)

PROVENANCE
The Artist, painted at Nyapari, South Australia
Tjungu Palya, Nyapari, South Australia cat. no. 09/409
Outstation Gallery, Darwin, Northern Territory
Private collection, Melbourne

12,000 AUD

Keith Stevens was born around 1940 at Granite Downs cattle station and later moved with his family to Pukatja (Ernabella). Weekends were spent on the family's Country at Piltati, where his father eventually settled at what is now Nyapari. Stevens belonged to a significant family of painters of Piltati Country: his mother, Eileen Yaritja Stevens, and uncles Tiger Palpatja and Ginger Wikilyiri also developed important practices centred on this place.

A senior lawman, Stevens built his paintings slowly through dense patterning, creating richly worked surfaces with an almost sculptural quality.

Wati Mamu, 2009, depicts songlines connecting Piltati and Watarru. A mamu—a sorcerer figure—disguises himself as kuka (game) until a man spears and kills him, before travelling on to Watarru where another mamu awaits. Tjungu Palya describes the narrative as a single story binding the two places.



IAN ROBERTS
b. 1960
Pitjantjatjara language

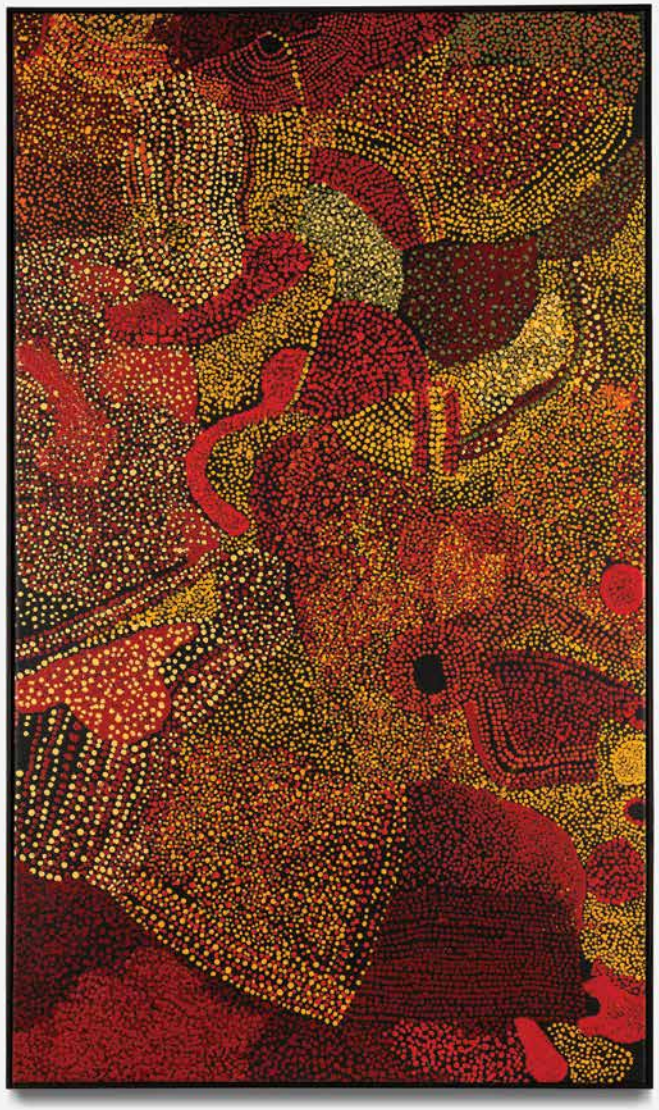
Nyapariku Ngura 2010
synthetic polymer paint on linen
198 × 113 cm (78.0 × 44.5 inches)

PROVENANCE
The Artist, painted at Nyapari, South Australia
Tjungu Palya, South Australia, cat. no. 10189
Desert Mob, Alice Springs, Northern Territory
Private collection, Melbourne, Victoria,
acquired from the above

15,000 AUD

Ian Roberts was born at Ernabella Mission in the Aṉangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands in the 1960s. He was raised by his mother, artist Iyawi Wikilyiri, and his aunt, artist Nura Rupert. Before beginning to paint with Tjungu Palya in 2008, Roberts worked in housing repairs at Indulkana and later as a police aide at Ernabella.

Nyapariku Ngura, 2010, depicts Country around Nyapari: rocky hills rendered in bands of ochre and grey, crossed by pale tracks marking the routes families once walked between camps. Roberts described the painting simply as his grandmother's Country—a place of rockholes and old camps, once busy with people and now recalled through paint.



JIMMY BAKER
c. 1915 – 2010
Pitjantjatjara language

Kalaya 2009
synthetic polymer paint on linen
87 × 147 cm (34.3 × 57.9 inches)

PROVENANCE
The Artist, painted at Nyapari, South Australia
Tjungu Palya, South Australia, cat. no. 09078
Marshall Arts, Adelaide, South Australia
Private collection, Melbourne, Victoria,
acquired from the above

16,000 AUD

Jimmy Baker (c. 1915–2010) was born along the Kalaya Tjukurpa—the Emu Dreaming track—at a rockhole called Malumpa, near present-day Kanpi. Before becoming a painter, he worked as a shearer at Ernabella Mission and later helped re-establish the homeland community at Kanpi. A senior law man and ngangkari (traditional healer), Baker held responsibility for major Tjukurpa including Kalaya (Emu) and Piltati (Sacred Rockhole).

Baker began painting in 2004, late in a long life grounded in this Country and its knowledge. Kalaya, 2009, returns to the Tjukurpa associated with his birthplace, depicting camping places connected by the paths travelled by emus and a rockhole where the birds come to drink.

Baker was represented by three works in *Culture Warriors*, the National Gallery of Australia's inaugural National Indigenous Art Triennial in 2007.



JIMMY BAKER
c. 1915 – 2010
Pitjantjatjara language

Kalaya Tjukurpa 2010
synthetic polymer paint on linen
91 × 116 cm (35.8 × 45.7 inches)

PROVENANCE
The Artist, painted at Nyapari, South Australia
Tjungu Palya, South Australia, cat. no. 10/014
Marshall Arts, Adelaide, South Australia
Private collection, Melbourne, Victoria,
acquired from the above

12,000 AUD



SANDY BRUMBY
c. 1935 – 2017
Pitjantjatjara language

Kulitja 2011
synthetic polymer paint on linen
167 × 153 cm (65.7 × 60.2 inches)

PROVENANCE
The Artist painted at Kalka, South Australia
Ninuku Arts, South Australia, cat. no. 11212
Desert Mob 2011, Alice Springs, Northern Territory
Private collection, Melbourne, Victoria,
acquired from the above

EXHIBITED
Desert Mob 2011, Araluen Arts Centre,
Alice Springs, Northern Territory

12,000 AUD

Sandy Brumby began painting at Ninuku Arts in 2010, in his sixties, after a working life across the pastoral borderlands of northern South Australia and the southern Northern Territory. Raised at Victory Downs, he later worked as a stockman at Mount Cavanagh and lived at Pukatja, Amata, Pipalyatjara and Kalka.

Cataracts meant Brumby worked close to the canvas, developing a slow and deliberate approach in which each painting became an experiment. During a 2010 residency at Ninuku Arts, Australian abstract painter Ildiko Kovacs encouraged Brumby to work with a paint roller, a technique that became important to his developing practice.

Kulitja, 2011, belongs to this early period of experimentation and was exhibited at Desert Mob that year. Its bold forms draw on imagery associated with rock and cave art around Uluru and Kata Tjuta, transformed through Brumby's increasingly distinctive approach to paint.



SANDY BRUMBY
c. 1935 – 2017
Pitjantjatjara language

Kulitja 2011
synthetic polymer paint on linen
183 × 110 cm (72.0 × 43.3 inches)

PROVENANCE
The Artist painted at Kalka, South Australia
Ninuku Arts, South Australia, cat. no. 11525
RAFT artspace, Alice Springs, Northern Territory
Private collection, Melbourne, Victoria,
acquired from the above

EXHIBITED
Sandy Brumby, RAFT artspace, Alice Springs,
Northern Territory, 6 – 29 September 2012

12,000 AUD



HARRY TJUTJUNA
c. 1930 – 2019
Pitjantjatjara language

Wati Ngintaka 2015
synthetic polymer paint on linen
122 × 61 cm (48.0 × 24.0 inches)

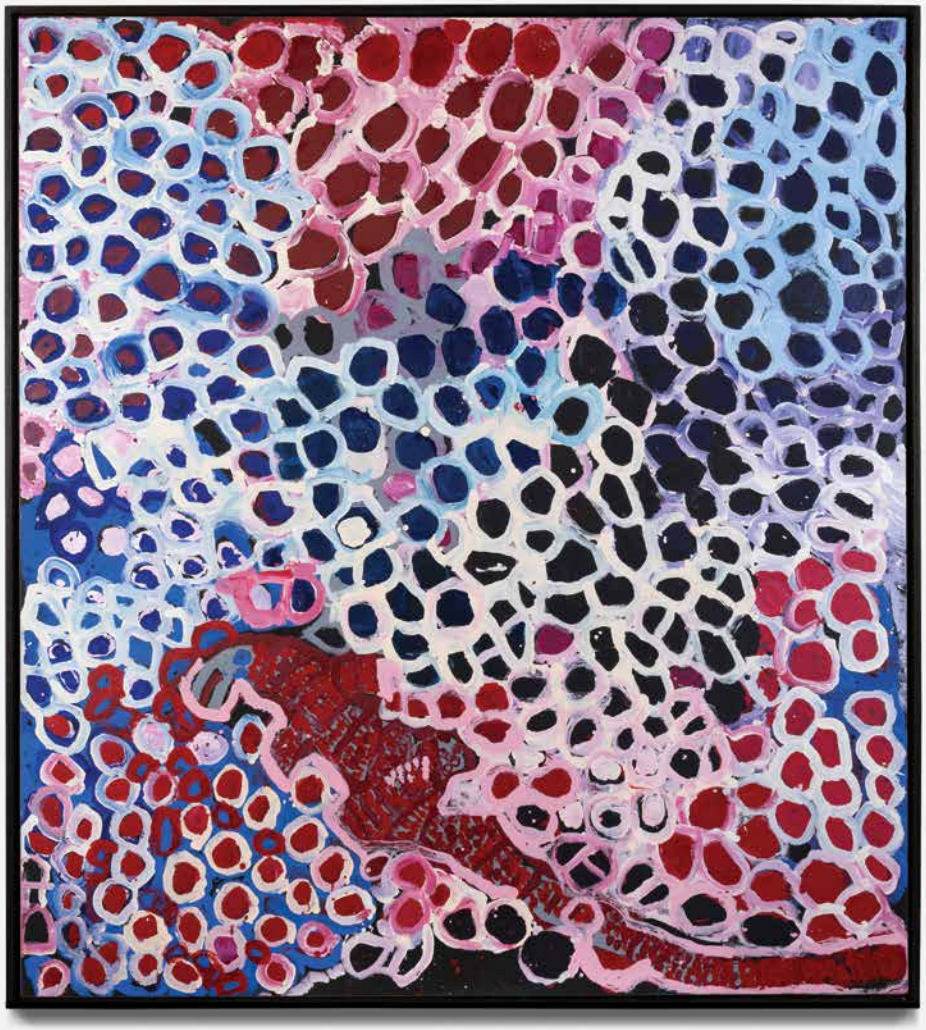
PROVENANCE
The Artist, painted at Kalka, South Australia
Ninuku Arts, Kalka, South Australia, cat. no. 15-11
Outstation Gallery, Darwin, Northern Territory
Private collection, Melbourne, Victoria,
acquired from the above

7,700 AUD

Harry Tjutjuna (c. 1930 – 2019) was a senior law man, ngangkari and highly respected custodian of Tjukurpa associated with Pipalyatjara. Born around 1930, Tjutjuna spent time at Pukatja (Ernabella) before returning to Pipalyatjara, where he became one of Ninuku Arts' most significant senior painters.

Wati Ngintaka Tjukurpa tells of a perentie lizard man who steals a grinding stone and is pursued east across Country, before being speared and killed while attempting to carry it home. The story belongs to Country around Pipalyatjara and was one of the Tjukurpa for which Tjutjuna held senior cultural authority.

Wati Ngintaka Tjukurpa, 2015, was painted during Tjutjuna's final years of artistic practice, shortly before he moved into aged care at Pukatja in 2016. The Ngintaka is not immediately apparent: its form seems to emerge from and disappear back into dense passages of yellow, white, red and black, as though the ancestral figure is moving through, or concealing itself within, the Country of the painting.



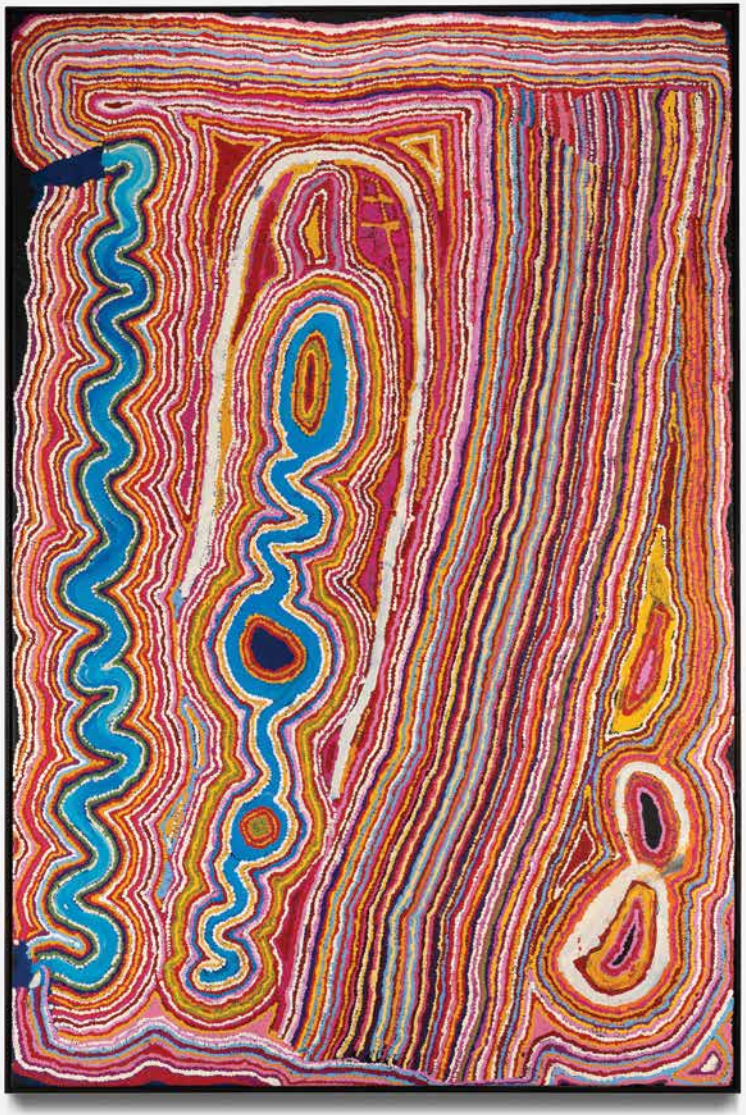
HARRY TJUTJUNA
c. 1930 – 2019
Pitjantjatjara language

Wati Ngintaka 2012
synthetic polymer paint on linen
183 × 168 cm (72.0 × 66.1 inches)

PROVENANCE
The Artist, painted at Kalka, South Australia
Ninuku Arts, South Australia, cat. no. 12229
RAFT artspace, Alice Springs, Northern Territory
Private collection, Melbourne, Victoria,
acquired from the above

EXHIBITED
Ngintaka, RAFT artspace in partnership with Ninuku Arts,
Alice Springs, 6 – 29 September 2012

18,000 AUD



JIMMY DONEGAN
c. 1940 – 2022
Pitjantjatjara & Ngaanyatjarra languages

Pukara 2012
synthetic polymer paint on linen
183 × 122 cm (72.0 × 48.0 inches)

PROVENANCE
The Artist, painted at Kalka, South Australia
Ninuku Arts, South Australia, cat. no. NKJD12075
ReDot Gallery, Singapore
Private collection, Melbourne, Victoria,
acquired from the above

14,000 AUD

Jimmy Donegan (c. 1940 – 2022) had strong connections across the Ngaanyatjarra and APY Lands, including Papulankutja in Western Australia and Kalka in South Australia, where he painted through Ninuku Arts. In 2010, Donegan received both the overall Telstra Art Award and a category award at NATSIAA for *Papa Tjukurpa Munu Pukara*, 2009.

Pukara, 2012, returns to this important site and its Tjukurpa. Wati Kutjara Wanampi, a father and son watersnake, return to Pukara after travelling to Wiluna. As they collect honey from flowering grevillea at the rockhole, Wati Mututja, the black ant, discovers them and spears the younger wanampi in the side. Donegan gives the story extraordinary visual force through dense bands of colour, with vivid turquoise forms tracing the presence of the wanampi through Country.



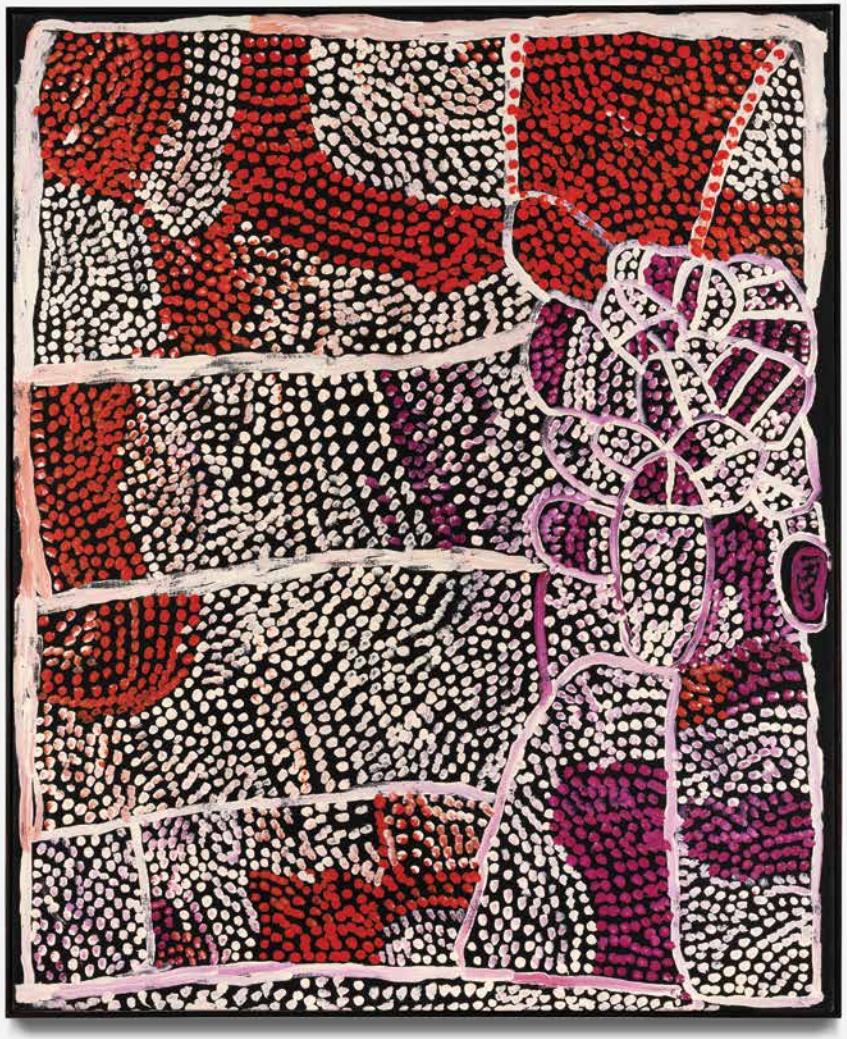
JIMMY DONEGAN
c. 1940 – 2022
Pitjantjatjara & Ngaanyatjarra languages

Pukara 2012
synthetic polymer paint on linen
122 × 91 cm (48.0 × 35.8 inches)

PROVENANCE
The Artist, painted at Kalka, South Australia
Ninuku Arts, Kalka, South Australia, cat. no. 12418
Redot Gallery, Singapore
Private collection, Melbourne, Victoria,
acquired from the above

7,700 AUD

SYDNEY/GADIGAL



MILATJARI PUMANI
c. 1928 – 2014
Yankunytjatjara language

Ngura Walytja, Antara 2011
synthetic polymer paint on linen
111 × 91 cm (43.7 × 35.8 inches)

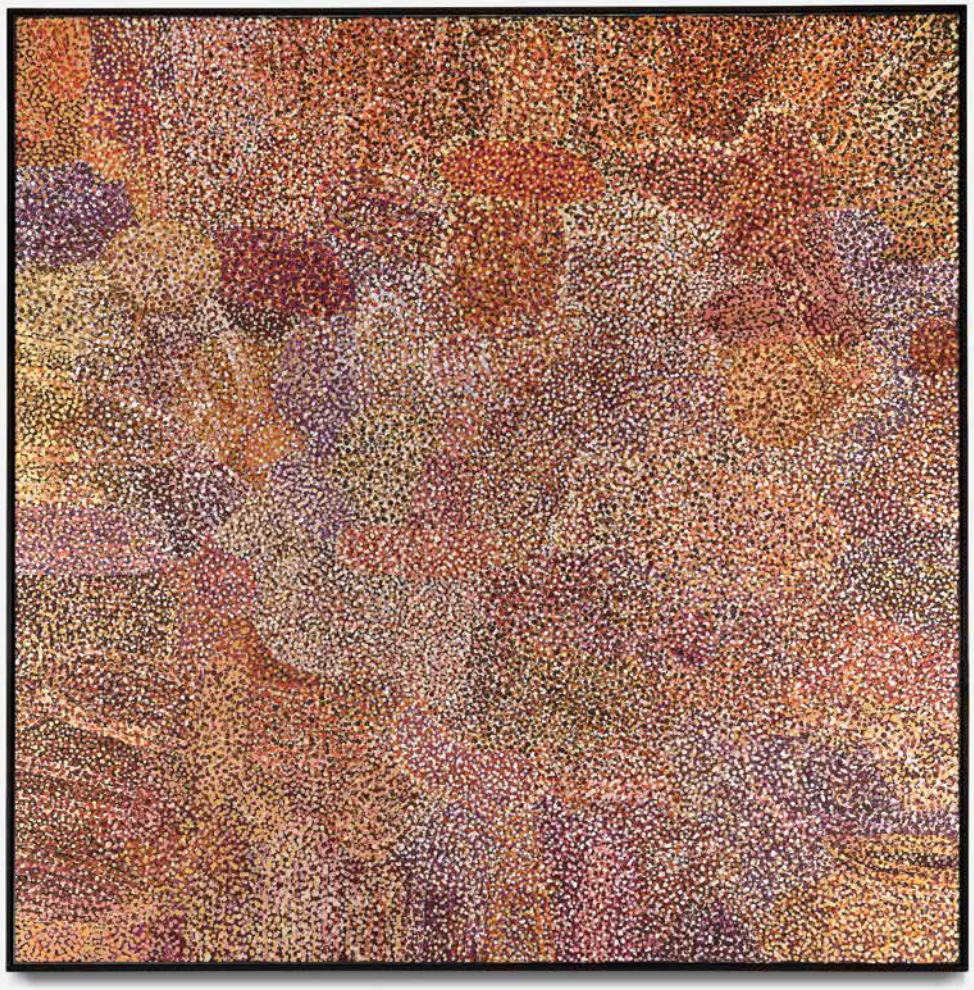
PROVENANCE
The Artist, painted at Mimili, South Australia
Mimili Maku, South Australia, cat. no. 631-2011
ReDot Gallery, Singapore
Private collection, Melbourne, Victoria,
acquired from the above

7,700 AUD

Milatjari Pumani began painting late in life, bringing decades of knowledge of Antara, her ancestral homeland near Mimili, to a practice that became highly influential within Mimili Maku Arts and across subsequent generations of her family.

Ngura Walytja, Antara depicts the rockholes and hills of Antara and the Maku Tjukurpa (Witchetty Grub Dreaming), a major ancestral narrative for this Country. Pumani developed an open, organic visual language, with sweeping fields of colour interwoven with dotted passages and sinuous lines that evoke the contours and rhythms of Country without describing them literally.

Her eldest daughter, Ngupulya Pumani, began painting a year later, followed by Betty Kuntiwa Pumani and younger generations including Sandra and Josina Pumani. What emerged was a remarkable matrilineal artistic lineage: shared knowledge and responsibility for Country carried forward not through stylistic repetition, but through distinctly individual ways of painting it.



NGUPULYA PUMANI
1948 – 2019
Pitjantjatjara & Yankunytjatjara languages

Maku Inmaku Pakani 2012
synthetic polymer paint on linen
198 × 198 cm (78.0 × 78.0 inches)

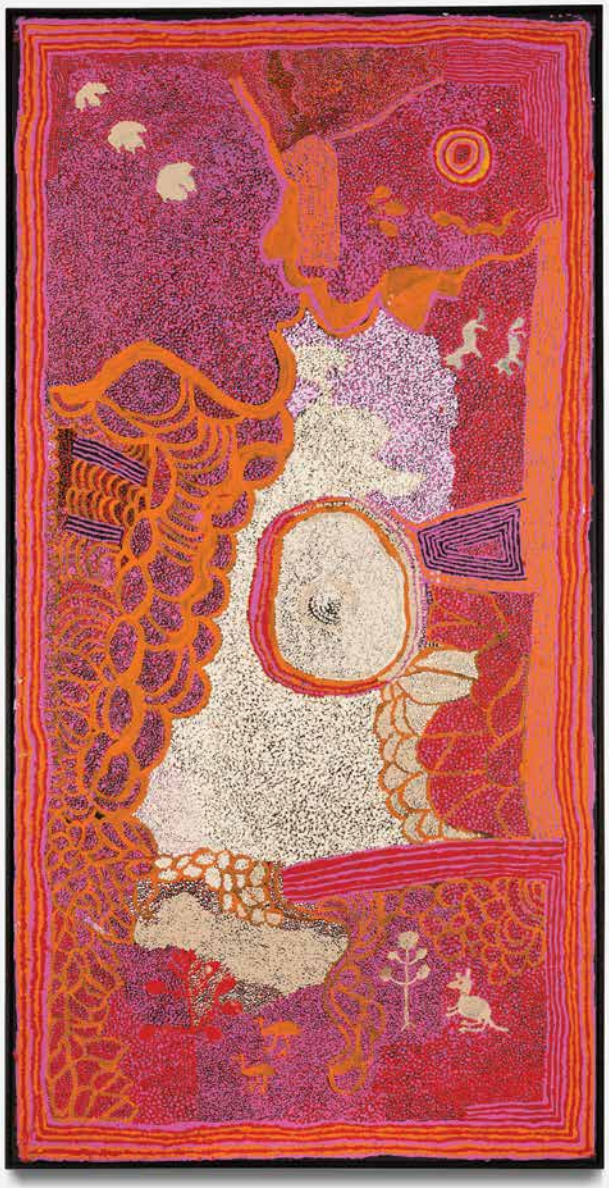
PROVENANCE
The Artist, painted at Mimili, South Australia
Mimili Maku, South Australia, cat. no. 563-2012
Outstation Gallery, Darwin, Northern Territory
Private collection, Melbourne, Victoria,
acquired from the above

18,000 AUD

Ngupulya Pumani was the eldest daughter of Milatjari Pumani and began painting a year after her mother. She became one of Mimili Maku Arts' senior painters and served for many years as chairperson of the art centre.

Maku Inmaku Pakani, 2012, carries the Maku Tjukurpa, a women's story associated with Antara and the search for mai (food). Minyma (women) travel to a rockhole, clear it and wait for rain before tapping the water and digging beneath the witchetty bush to find enough maku (witchetty grubs) for everyone.

Ngupulya's visual language developed from, but did not replicate, her mother's. Milatjari's open fields and loose dotting became denser, more concentrated passages of colour in Ngupulya's hands. Her younger sister Betty Kuntiwa Pumani and daughter Josina Pumani also paint Antara, extending a remarkable family practice across three generations while developing distinctly individual approaches to the same Country.



LANGALIKI LANGALIKI
c. 1936 – 2016
Pitjantjatjara language

Aliwanyu wanyu 2011
synthetic polymer paint on linen
150 × 76 cm (59.1 × 29.9 inches)

PROVENANCE
The Artist painted at Pukatja, South Australia
Ernabella Arts, South Australia, cat. no. 453-11
Marshall Arts, Adelaide, South Australia
Private collection, Melbourne, Victoria,
acquired from the above

8,800 AUD

Langaliki Langaliki (c. 1936 – 2016) was born in the bush near Amata to a Yankunytjatjara mother from Makiri, southwest of Kaltjiti, and a Pitjantjatjara father from Palatu. As a child, she moved to Ernabella, where she attended the mission school and later worked in the kitchen and craft room, learning weaving and sewing. After marrying, Langaliki worked on pastoral stations, including Kenmore Park, before beginning to paint in 2002.

Aliwanyu wanyu, 2011, depicts a place near Watinuma where a blind Wanampi (watersnake) lives at a waterhole. Two dingoes hunt around the site, in Country also inhabited by kangaroo, emu and rabbits. Langaliki brings these animals, the waterhole and the ancestral presence of the Wanampi together within a single field, presenting Country as a place where everyday life and Tjukurpa coexist.



NURA RUPERT
c. 1933 – 2016
Pitjantjatjara language

Papa Tjuta Tjukurpa – Camp Dog Story 2010
synthetic polymer paint on linen
60 × 91 cm (23.6 × 35.8 inches)

PROVENANCE
The Artist, painted at Pukatja, South Australia
Ernabella Artists, South Australia, cat. no. 136/10
Outstation Gallery, Darwin, Northern Territory
Private collection, Melbourne, Victoria,
acquired from the above

6,600 AUD

As a teenager, Nura Rupert learned weaving in the Ernabella craft room, making hooked floor rugs and knitted garments, and worked with punu (wood carving) decorated with walka, a burnt-line technique. Around 2000, Rupert returned to the art centre to make mukata (beanies) and began painting.

As an older woman, she often drew on stories remembered from childhood, particularly mamu—the spirits and monsters of Aṉangu storytelling. *Papa Tjuta Tjukurpa – Camp Dog Story*, 2010, turns instead to the familiar presence of dogs around Ernabella. "Papa tjuta ngura uwankara," Rupert explained—there are many dogs everywhere—recalling that some families kept as many as ten as companions.

The work captures something characteristic of Rupert's practice: the ability to bring memory, observation and storytelling together with humour and directness, transforming an everyday scene into a vivid account of community life.



TJUNGKARA KEN
born 1969
Pitjantjatjara language

Ngayuku Ngura – My Country 2010
synthetic polymer paint on linen
152.5 × 122.5 cm (60.0 × 48.2 inches)

PROVENANCE
The Artist, painted at Amata, South Australia
Tjala Arts, South Australia, cat. no. 354-10
Outstation Gallery, Darwin, Northern Territory
Private collection, Melbourne, Victoria,
acquired from the above

15,000 AUD

Tjungkara Ken was born in 1969 at Rock Bore, the youngest of nine children of artists Mick Wikilyiri and Paniny Mick. She began painting in 1997 and has developed a practice grounded in both her father's Country around Amata and Walitjara, and her mother's Country further west near Irrunytju in Western Australia.

Ngayuku Ngura – My Country, 2010, depicts Ken's father's Country through shifting fields of colour and pattern. Fine, densely worked dotting gathers into larger forms across the canvas, creating a surface that seems to move between intimate detail and an expansive view of Country.

Ken also paints collaboratively with her sisters as the Ken Sisters Collaborative, whose *Seven Sisters* won the Wynne Prize in 2016. Her own *Seven Sisters* received the Roberts Family Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Prize at the Art Gallery of New South Wales in 2021.



TJUNGKARA KEN
born 1969
Pitjantjatjara language

Ngayuka Ngura – My Country 2010
synthetic polymer paint on linen
152.5 × 122 cm (60.0 × 48.0 inches)

PROVENANCE
The Artist, painted at Amata, South Australia
Tjala Arts, South Australia, cat. no. 428-10
Marshall Arts, Adelaide, South Australia
Private collection, Melbourne, Victoria,
acquired from the above

15,000 AUD



WAWIRIYA BURTON
c. 1925 – 2021
Pitjantjatjara language

Ngayuku Mamaku Ngura – My Father's Country 2012
synthetic polymer paint on linen
197 × 198 cm (77.6 × 78.0 inches)

PROVENANCE
The Artist, painted at Amata, South Australia
Tjala Arts, South Australia, cat. no. 188-12
Outstation Gallery, Darwin, Northern Territory
Private collection, Melbourne, Victoria,
acquired from the above

24,000 AUD

Wawiriya Burton was a senior Aṉangu woman of considerable cultural authority and a respected ngangkari (traditional healer) from Amata. Before beginning to paint at Tjala Arts in 2008, she wove for Tjanpi Desert Weavers and carved punu for Maruku Arts, bringing a long history of making and cultural knowledge to her painting practice.

Ngayuku Mamaku Ngura – My Father's Country, 2012, depicts Burton's father's Country near Pipalyatjara, west of Amata. Minyma mingkiri tjuta—many small female desert mice—are pregnant and give birth to their young before travelling to surrounding rockholes in search of food and water. Dotted lines across the painting trace the mingkiri as they move through Country.

Burton returned to her father's Country throughout her practice. Here, the movement of the mingkiri between rockholes brings the landscape alive as a network of water, food, family and ancestral knowledge.



RUBY TJANGAWA WILLIAMSON
c. 1940 – 2014
Pitjantjatjara language

Puli Murpu 2010
synthetic polymer paint on linen
152.5 × 122 cm (60.0 × 48.0 inches)

PROVENANCE
The Artist, painted at Amata, South Australia
Tjala Arts, South Australia, cat. no. 444-10
Marshall Arts, Adelaide, South Australia
Private collection, Melbourne, Victoria,
acquired from the above

15,000 AUD

Ruby Tjangawa Williamson was a senior Pitjantjatjara woman of considerable cultural authority, born around 1940 in the bush west of Amata. Her family settled at Musgrave Park Station in the mid-1950s, where she later married a stockman.

Long before she began painting, Williamson was an accomplished hunter, punu (wood) carver, tjanpi (grass) weaver, dancer and storyteller. She began painting in 2000 and became part of the early generation of artists at Minymaku Arts, developing a distinctive and experimental visual language grounded in Country and cultural knowledge.

Puli Murpu, 2010, depicts the Musgrave Ranges behind Amata. Kapi tjukula (rockholes) appear above a broad yellow field defining the mountains, reducing Country to bold areas of colour and form. The composition renders the landscape with a dynamic force and demonstrates the confident individuality of Williamson's mature practice.



MARINGKA BAKER
born 1952
Pitjantjatjara language

Anmangunga 2009
synthetic polymer paint on linen
132 × 198 cm (52.0 × 78.0 inches)

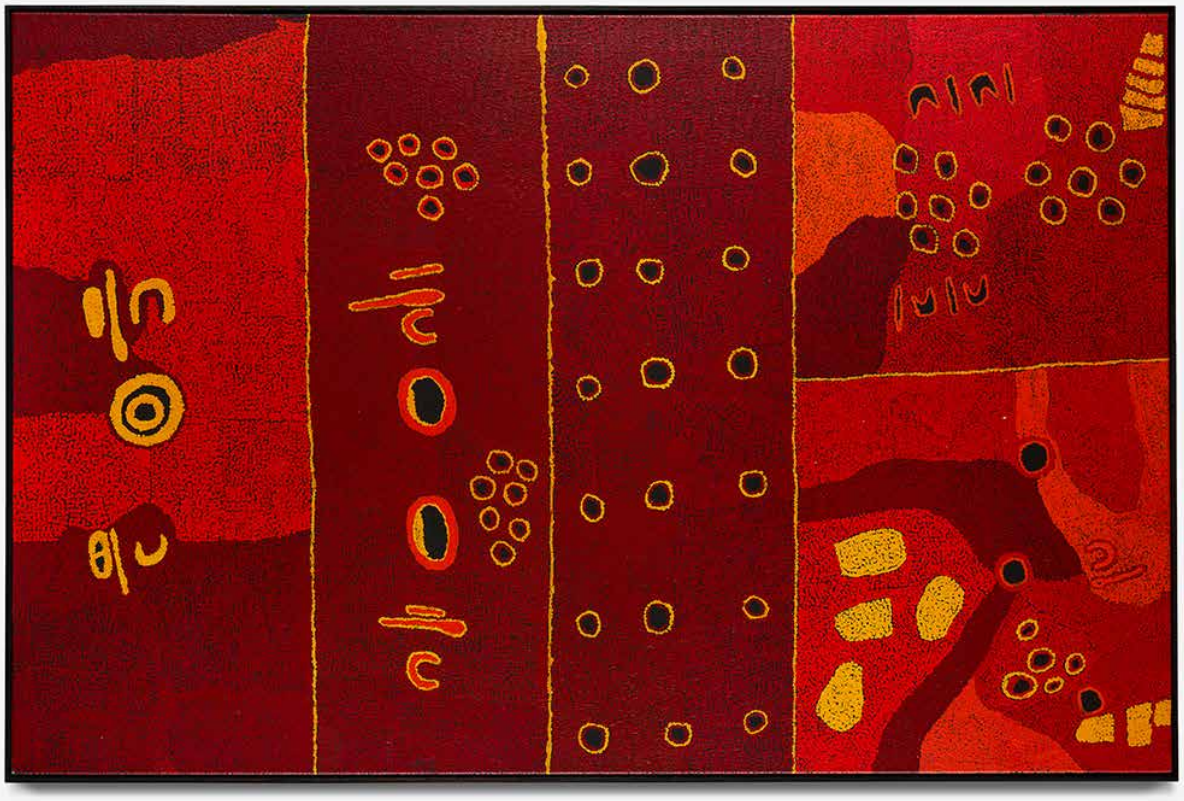
PROVENANCE
The Artist, painted at Nyapari, South Australia
Tjungu Palya Artists, South Australia, cat. no. 09/466
Marshall Arts, Adelaide, South Australia
Private collection, Melbourne, Victoria,
acquired from the above

24,000 AUD

Maringka Baker is a senior Pitjantjatjara artist born around 1952 at Kaliumpil, a rockhole and traditional camping place in Western Australia. After her parents died when she was young, Baker was raised by Anmanari Brown and members of her extended family. She attended mission schools at Warburton and Ernabella and later made her home at Kanpi.

Anmangunga, 2009, depicts Country south of Nyapari towards Watarru. "It is my mother's place," Baker explained. The painting carries the Papa Inura Tjukurpa (Dingo Creation Story), in which a group of dogs prepares to travel to Wingellina. One refuses to make the journey and remains behind, its presence in Country marked by a rock.

Baker described this as Tjukurpa kunpu, Tjukurpa mulapa—a strong and true ancestral story. The painting holds her mother's Country and the continuing presence of that Tjukurpa together within the landscape.

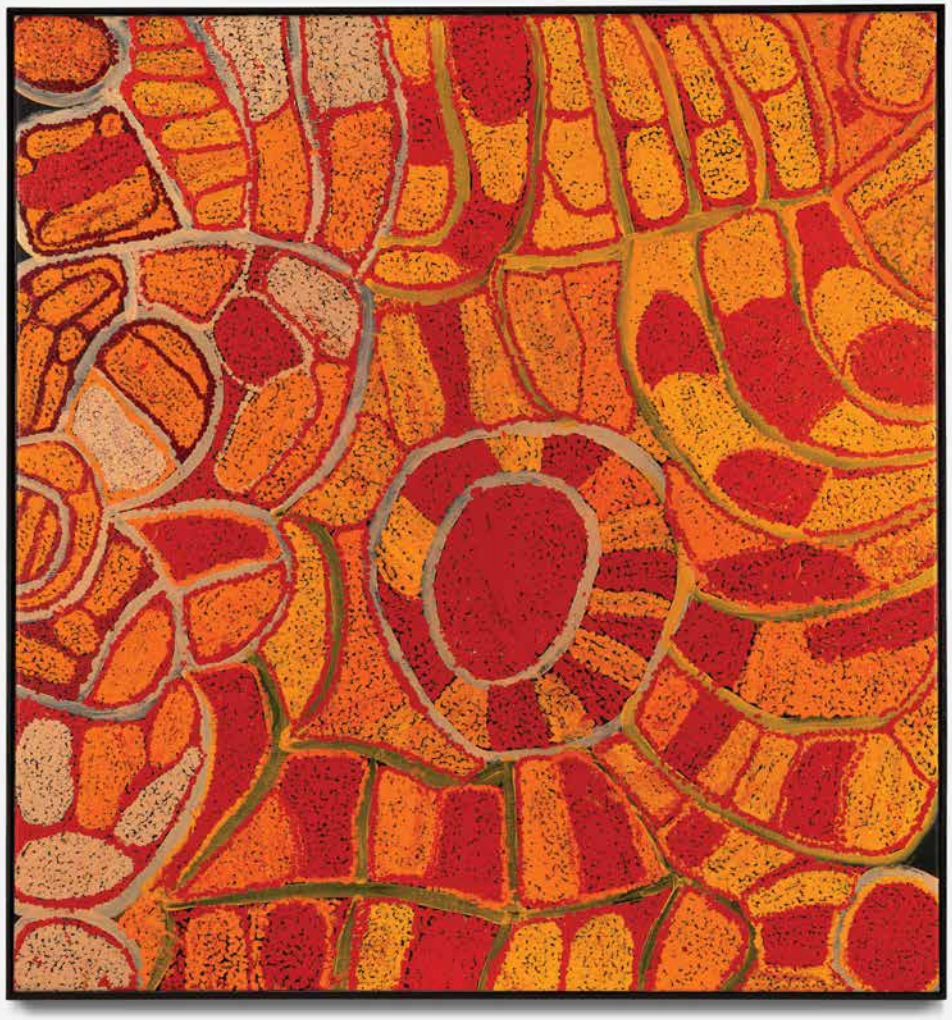


MARINGKA BAKER
born 1952
Pitjantjatjara language

Minyma Kutjara 2008
synthetic polymer paint on linen
196 × 126 cm (77.2 × 49.6 inches)

PROVENANCE
The Artist, painted at Nyapari, South Australia
Tjungu Palya Artists, South Australia, cat. no. 08/538
Marshall Arts, Adelaide, South Australia
Private collection, Melbourne, Victoria,
acquired from the above

24,000 AUD



NYANKULYA WATSON
c. 1938 – 2012
Pitjantjatjara language

Aloysius 2008
synthetic polymer paint on linen
110 × 105 cm (43.3 × 41.3 inches)

PROVENANCE
The Artist, painted at Nyapari, South Australia
Tjungu Palya, South Australia, cat. no. 08/343
Marshall Arts, Adelaide, South Australia
Private collection, Melbourne, Victoria,
acquired from the above

8,800 AUD

Nyankulya Watson (c. 1938) was born at Mt Aloysius, at a rockhole near the tri-state border. A Pitjantjatjara woman, she later became a founding member of Irrunytju Arts and lived and worked across several communities in the region.

Aloysius, 2008, returns directly to her birthplace. "The main rockhole in the middle is Aloysius, ngayuku mamaku ngura (my father's country). I was born at this place," Watson explained. She recalled her family walking throughout this Country in search of food and water in the early days, before motorcars and permanent communities.

The central rockhole anchors the composition, surrounded by interconnected fields of colour and form. In returning to Aloysius, Watson brings birthplace, her father's Country and memories of family movement through the landscape together within a single painting.



NELLIE STEWART
c. 1938 – 2012
Pitjantjatjara language

Minyma Kutjara 2009
synthetic polymer paint on linen
125 × 92.5 cm (49.2 × 36.4 inches)

PROVENANCE
The Artist, painted at Nyapari, South Australia
Tjungu Palya, Nyapari, South Australia, cat. no. 09/076
Outstation Gallery, Darwin, Northern Territory
Private collection, Melbourne, Victoria,
acquired from the above

6,600 AUD

Nellie Stewart (c. 1930s – 2012) was a Pitjantjatjara artist born in the bush at Pipalyatjara, her father's Country. She attended school at Ernabella Mission and later taught Pitjantjatjara language in Alice Springs. Stewart began painting in 2007 after moving with her family to Nyapari.

Minyma Kutjara, 2009, carries the Two Sisters Tjukurpa. As a child, the younger ancestral sister is blown far to the south, to Country where people speak another language and practise different inma (ceremonies). Years later, the elder sister finds her and begins the long journey home, passing on ceremonial knowledge as they travel. Near Irrunytju, the sisters make hair belts for inma before the elder sister throws her digging stick, creating the rockhole Wana Wani.

In Stewart's account, the ancestral journey is also one of teaching: knowledge is carried home through Country and passed from one generation to the next.



WINGU TINGIMA
c. 1920 – 2010
Pitjantjatjara language

Pukara 2009
synthetic polymer paint on linen
139 × 95.5 cm (54.7 × 37.6 inches)

PROVENANCE
The Artist, painted at Nyapari, South Australia
Tjungu Palya Artists, Nyapari, South Australia, cat. no. 09/247
Putipula Gallery, Noosa, Queensland
Private collection, Melbourne, Victoria,
acquired from the above

18,000 AUD

Wingu Tingima (c. 1920s – 2010) was a senior Pitjantjatjara artist born at Nyumun, a rockhole in the Western Desert of Western Australia. She later travelled on foot with her parents to Ernabella Mission, where she worked spinning sheep's wool, and spent her later life between Nyapari and Irrunytju.

Pukara, 2009, depicts a place Tingima described unequivocally: "This is a dangerous place, Pukara." Wanampi kutjara—a father and son watersnake—live there. After the younger wanampi steals bush foods gathered by Aṉangu women, they discover him and spear him in the side. Tingima concludes: "Tjukurpa mulapa. This is a true story. The two snakes still live at this place."

Tingima's words are crucial to understanding the painting. Pukara is not presented as the setting for an ancestral event confined to the past: the wanampi remain there, and Tjukurpa remains present in Country.



Photograph: Paul Patterson

MELBOURNE/NAARM, SYDNEY/GADIGAL, NEW YORK/LENAPEHOKING