

# THE STARS BEFORE US ALL

Australian First Nations Art

MICHAEL REID

SYDNEY

BERLIN

BEYOND



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Across the centuries, within the full sweep of world art, Australian artists have gifted humanity two significant contributions: the landscape and the art of its First Peoples.

In their vision of the landscape, each succeeding generation of Australian painters working within a European tradition has been able to add another dimension to our understanding of the land. Given the depth of this centuries-old Western tradition, that is no small accomplishment.

If, through our landscapes, Australian art has contributed to seeing the world anew, the art of Australia's First Peoples stands without parallel. Born of isolation and a profound need to communicate across peoples and across an endless terrain, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art is our continent's truly unique gift to the wider creative world. Emerging from traditions of rock art, bark painting, body painting, weaving, sculptural carvings, and ephemeral sand works, First Nations artists have extended their practices into painting, performance art, textiles and fabric, photography, multi-media installation and ambitious metalwork.

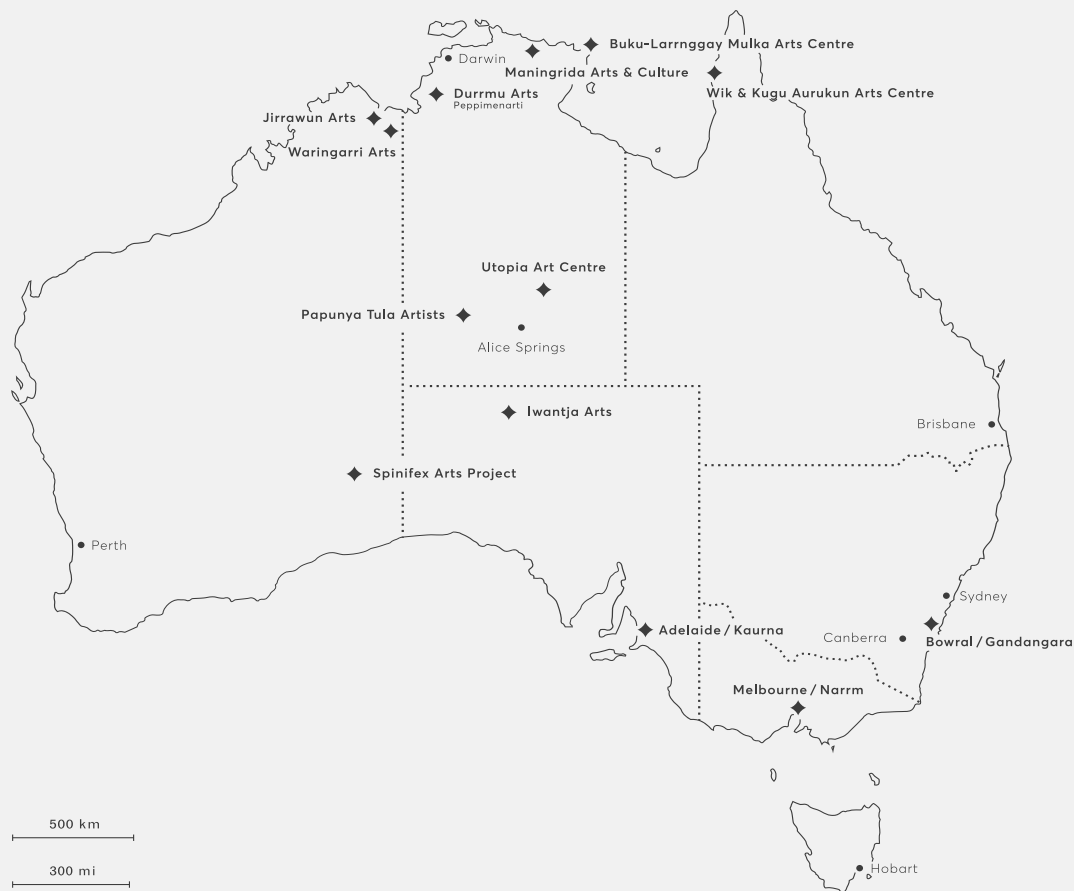
*The Stars Before Us All* is an exhibition that opens a window into an extraordinary contemporary art tradition. It reveals a culture that, after millennia of relative isolation, has in the last two decades burst onto the global stage, offering audiences not only works of great aesthetic power but also a vision of art as continuity, survival, renewal and growth. In this sense, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art is not just Australia's unique addition to the art world - it is among the world's oldest, deepest, most original and ever evolving contemporary visual art traditions.

Michael Reid OAM  
Michael Reid Sydney + Berlin, Chairman

Kathleen Petyarre, *Arnkerrth, Mountain Devil Lizard Dreaming*, 1995







The scale and ambition of the National Gallery of Victoria's touring exhibition *The Stars We Do Not See* marks a significant moment for First Nations art - and, by extension, Australian culture - on the global stage. *The Stars We Do Not See* has been curated by Myles Russell-Cook, Artistic Director and CEO of the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, and former Senior Curator of Australian and First Nations Art at the NGV.

*The Stars Before Us All* is a commercial exhibition that echoes the work of the NGV and the National Gallery of Art, aiming to amplify both practicing First Nations artists and key historical works alongside this landmark institutional presentation. Our goal is not only to introduce these artworks to American collections, but to connect you with the artists who are making them - living, practicing, inventive voices grounded in Country and community.

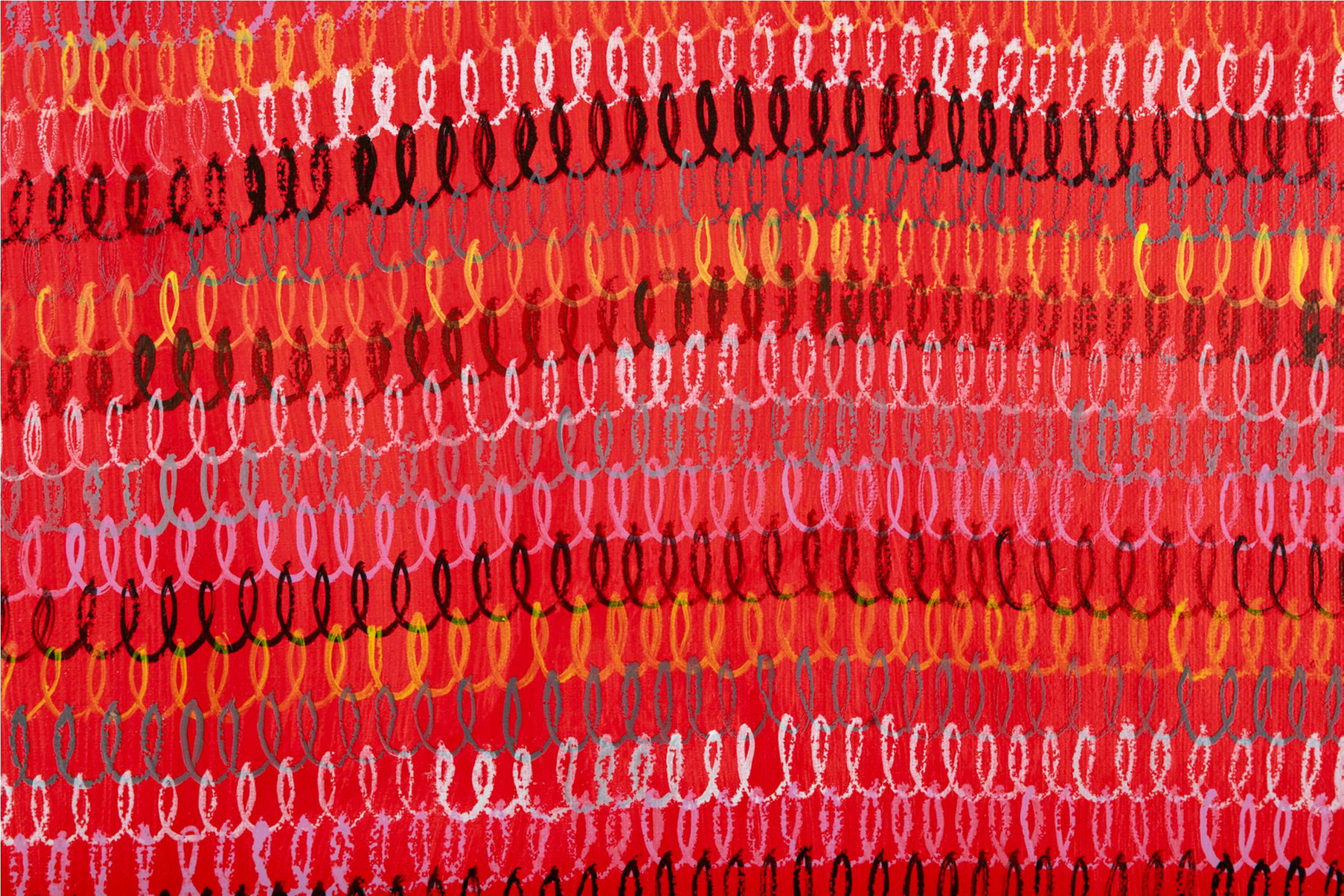
I'm continually drawn to artists whose work carries a clarity of voice - often stemming from deep cultural authority, disciplined practice, and innovative approaches to both making and meaning. Regina Pilawuk Wilson, our guest of honour, exemplifies this clarity. In the 1970s, Regina and her husband Harry led their community back onto their homelands, founding Peppimenarti in the Northern Territory. A matriarch for her people for decades, Regina's cultural practice - her weaving - is tied to the deep history of the Ngan'gikurrungurr people.

Her art practice translates these woven forms into painted design - an act of cultural preservation and reinvention, rendered with remarkable precision and power onto the painted surface.

Every artist selected for *The Stars Before Us All* brings their own clarity of voice. Each offers a unique expression of First Nations culture - contemporary, powerful, and rooted in a dynamic, multifaceted living tradition.

Toby Meagher  
Curator, *The Stars Before Us All*







# REGINA PILAWUK WILSON

*Dilly bag, 398-09, 2009*

signed verso left corner: "Pilawuk Regina Wilson" inscribed in black marker  
verso bears: Agathon Gallery Cat No. "7" inscribed middle left in black marker  
acrylic on linen  
200 x 120 cm  
\$28,000, framed

## PROVENANCE

Durmu Arts, Northern Territory, Australia  
Caruana & Reid Fine Art, 2011  
Private Collection, Australia

Born in 1948 in the Daly River region of the Northern Territory, Regina Pilawuk Wilson is a Ngangikurrungurr artist celebrated for her intricate weaving and acrylic paintings that draw on traditional fibre art techniques. A co-founder of the Peppimenarti community and Cultural Director of Durmu Arts Aboriginal Corporation, Wilson also won the General Painting Award at the 2003 Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards for *Syaw (Fishnet)*. Recently, Wilson has had a room named in her honour in the newly launched Australian Embassy in Washington DC. Wilson's cultural authority is widely recognised nationally and internationally, positioning her among the most important First Nations figures currently practicing.

In *Dilly bag* Wilson extrapolates on her documentation of material and weaving histories. The looped string and spiral configurations of traditional dilly bags, provide simple visual motifs that Regina builds upon to create precise structures, underscored by the delicacy and flexibility of woven fabric. Fluidity and tension are both at play in this abstracted rendition of the rhythmic process of twining and accretion. Regina uses the subtle colours of bush dyes in her painting, including lightened areas of natural fade that would come with time during an object's traditional use.<sup>1</sup>

Regina's paintings and weavings have been exhibited in major national and international exhibitions, including *Dreaming Their Way: Australian Aboriginal Women Painters* (National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington DC, 2006), *Floating Life* (QAGOMA, 2009), The Third Moscow Biennale of Contemporary Art (2009), *Ancestral Modern* (Seattle Art Museum, 2012), *String Theory* (Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, 2013), *Everywhen: The Eternal Present in Indigenous Art from Australia* (Harvard Art Museums, 2016), *Marking the Infinite* (touring USA & Canada, 2016-19), The TarraWarra Biennale (2023), and *Woven Histories* (Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2025).

Michael Reid has represented Regina Pilawuk Wilson, through Durmu Arts, for more than 15 years.

1. Art Leven, Regina Wilson, accessed 26th September 2025, [https://www.cooeart.com.au/artist\\_archive-non\\_gallery/regina-wilson](https://www.cooeart.com.au/artist_archive-non_gallery/regina-wilson)





Regina Pilawuk Wilson

*Durrmu*, 405-08, 2008

signed verso left corner: "Regina Pilawuk Wilson" inscribed in black marker

verso bears: "Durrmu Arts Peppimenarti" inscribed middle upper in black marker

184 cm x 110 cm

\$26,000, framed

## PROVENANCE

Durrmu Arts, Northern Territory, Australia

Wilson's 2008 painting *Durrmu* explores the ceremonial body painting traditions of the Ngangikurrungurr people. This work charts the ceremonial designs applied to male and female faces and torsos for ceremonial dance. In Wilson's oeuvre of transferring her weaving designs and patterns into canvas, this work acts as one of the few in which ceremonial knowledge is shared.





Regina Pilawuk Wilson  
*Mat Weaving (436-08), 2008*  
acrylic on canvas  
120 x 120 cm  
\$14,400

## PROVENANCE

Durumu Arts, Northern Territory, Australia

## SELECTED COLLECTIONS

Art Gallery of New South Wales, Australia  
Art Gallery of South Australia, Australia  
Macleay Museum, University of Sydney, Australia  
Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Australia  
National Gallery of Australia, Australia  
National Gallery of Victoria, Australia  
Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art (QAGOMA), Australia  
Seattle Art Museum, United States  
The British Museum, United Kingdom  
The Levi-Kaplan Collection, United States





# MIRDIDINGKINGATHI JUWARNDA SALLY GABORI (c.1924-2015)

*Dibirdibi Country, 2011*

bears inscription verso: artist's name, title, medium, Mornington Island Arts and Crafts cat. 6496-L-5G-0111  
and Alcaston Gallery cat. AK16790  
synthetic polymer paint on linen  
152.0 x 101.5 cm  
\$145,000

## PROVENANCE

Mornington Island Arts and Craft, Mornington Island, Queensland (stamped verso)  
Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne  
Private collection, Australia, acquired from the above

Mirdidingkingathi Juwarnda Sally Gabori's paintings are a tribute to the country on Bentinck Island, a small sparsely vegetated rise of land in the southern Gulf of Carpentaria where she grew up living off the natural abundance of the surrounding ocean and estuaries in the traditions of the Kaiadilt. In 1948, following a series of natural disasters, Gabori along with the other inhabitants of Bentinck Island, were forced to relocate to Gununa on nearby Mornington Island.

Gabori began her art career late in life, aged 85, however, unlike many other Aboriginal language groups, the Kaiadilt did not have a tradition of mark making - whether on tools, objects or bark. Taking this cultural background into consideration, Gabori's style is completely self-made, conjured from maps in her mind of Bentick Island and the country she loved. Judith Ryan, former curator at the National Gallery of Victoria compares her immense innovation and star power to that of similar late-starters, Emily Kame Kngwarreye and Lorna Fencer Napurrula.<sup>1</sup> From Gabori's earliest works, she has depicted aspects of her own beloved country as well as that of her brother, father and husband - including both geographical aspects of the landscape as well as the wildlife, specifically sea-life which is central to the landscape.<sup>2</sup>

Dibirdibi country, 2011 represents a subject painted more frequently by the artist than any other. It offers a powerful recollection of the country of her husband, Kabarrarjingathi Bulthuku Pat Gabori - a rival of her brother King Alfred, and whose relationship with Gabori created intense friction within Kaiadilt society, eventually resulting in her sibling's death.<sup>3</sup> The painting recalls the country of her husband and the Rock Cod Ancestor, depicting the big mangrove swamp on the edge of a large saltpan that covers part of her husband's country close to the site where the liver of Dibirdibi, the Rock Cod Ancestor, was thrown into the sea, creating a permanent fresh water well.

Although known primarily for her brightly coloured palette and intuitive, boldly executed brushstrokes, Gabori's depictions of Dibirdibi are also nevertheless multilayered in their meaning. She is at once painting the salt pans of the land, the Rock Cod Ancestor Dreaming of Dibirdibi country, a portrait of her late husband in connection to his country, and finally, her own longing, loss and memory.

1. Ryan, J., 'Broken Colour and Unbounded Space', in Mirdidingkingathi Juwarnda Sally Gabori: *dulka warngiid: Land of All*, Queensland Art Gallery I Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, 2016, pp. 33 - 34

2. Pinchbeck, C., 'Mirdidingkingathi Juwarnda Sally Gabori' in undisclosed: 2nd National Indigenous Art Triennial, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, 2012, p. 64

3. McLean, B., 'Dulka Warngiid; The Whole World' in Mirdidingkingathi Juwarnda Sally Gabori *Dulka Warngiid: Land of All*, op. cit., p. 16

CRISPIN GUTTERIDGE





# EMILY KAME KNGWARREYE (c. 1910-1996)

Emily Kame Kngwarreye

*Untitled (Awelye)*, 1993

signed verso: Emily Kngwarreye in black marker

verso bears: Delmore Gallery catalogue number 93K039 upper middle, Deutscher and Hackett label "Emily Kngwarreye / *Untitled (Awelye)*, 1993," DH250219 middle left, and "RVB" inscribed upper left in black marker

synthetic polymer paint on canvas

152 x 90 cm

\$195,000

## PROVENANCE

Commissioned by Delmore Gallery, via Alice Springs, Northern Territory, 1993

Chapman Gallery, Canberra

Private collection, Canberra, acquired from the above in 1996

Deutscher and Hackett: Important Australian Fine Art, lot 27 August 2025

Private collection, Sydney

Renowned for her vivid use of colour, Kngwarreye painted the desert country of Alhalkere, her birthplace and homeland on the western edge of Utopia. Living according to the traditions of the Eastern Anmatyerre, her works chart the seasonal changes of this environment, particularly the transformation after rain known as the "green time", when wildflowers and grasses flourished and provided essential foods.

In this painting, Kngwarreye employs layered fields of dots to evoke the abundance of growth after rain and to reference Awelye, the women's ceremonial body designs. The surface dissolves into chords of colour harmonies, achieved through the repeated build-up of paint. As Stephen Gilchrist has noted, such layering reflects a cultural worldview in which what is visible above ground is inseparable from the ancestral forces below:<sup>2</sup>

Kngwarreye's practice is regarded as one of the most significant contributions to modern Australian painting. Within less than a decade, she produced a body of work that redefined perceptions of Aboriginal art internationally, situating it within global dialogues of abstraction while remaining firmly grounded in her cultural knowledge and connection to country.

1. Isaacs, J., 'Amatyerre Woman' in Isaacs, et al., *Emily Kame Kngwarreye Paintings*, Craftsman House, Sydney, 1998, p. 13

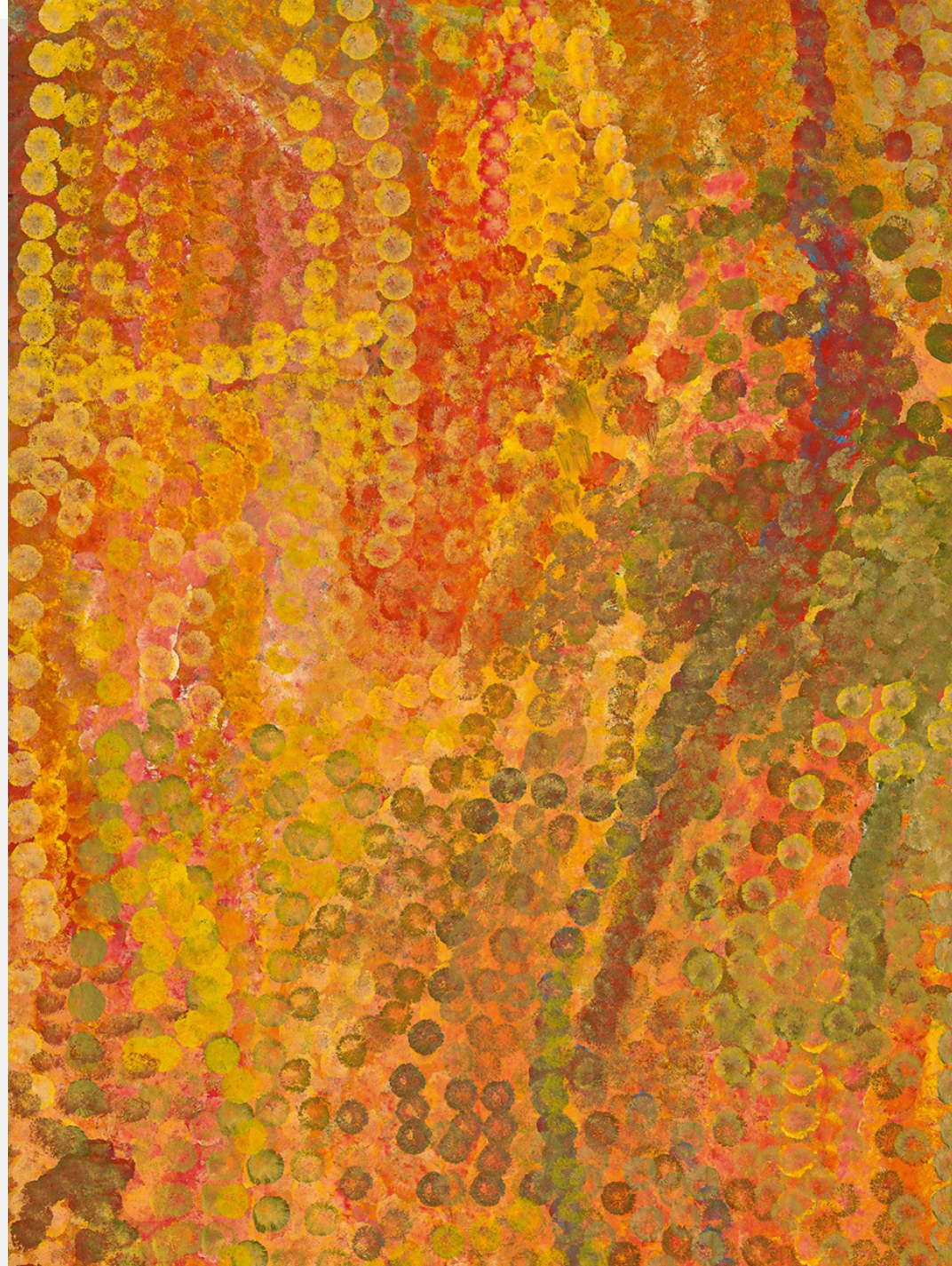
2. Gilchrist, S., 'I am Kam', in Cole, K. et al., *Emily Kam Kngwarreye*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, 2023, p. 169





## SELECTED COLLECTIONS

Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia  
Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, Australia  
Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, Australia  
Australian Embassy, Tokyo, Japan  
Australian National Maritime Museum, Sydney  
Ballarat Fine Art Gallery,, Australia  
Berardo Collection Museum, Portugal  
Bibliothèque Nationale de France, France  
Charles Darwin University Art Collection, Australia  
Flinders University Art Museum, Australia  
Heide Museum of Modern Art, Australia  
Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College, USA  
Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, University of Virginia, USA  
Macquarie University Art Gallery, Australia  
Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Australia  
Museum of Contemporary Art, Australia  
Museum of Contemporary Art, Japan  
National Gallery of Australia, Australia  
National Gallery of Victoria, Australia  
National Museum of Australia, Australia  
National Museum of Women in the Arts, USA  
Newcastle Art Gallery, Australia  
Parliament House Art Collection, Australia  
Powerhouse Museum, Australia  
Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art (QAGOMA), Australia  
Redland Art Gallery, USA  
Shepparton Art Museum, Australia  
TATE Modern, United Kingdom  
The Kelton Foundation, USA  
The Levi-Kaplan Collection, USA  
The Robert Holmes à Court Collection, Australia  
University of Queensland Art Museum, Australia  
University of Sydney Art Collection, Australia  
Wollongong Art Gallery, Australia





# DANIE MELLOR

*Piccaninny Paradise*, 2010

signed: "Danie Mellor 2010" lower right and inscribed lower left "Piccaninny Paradise" in pencil  
verso bears: Art Gallery of Western Australia label with artwork details "Danie Mellor / *Piccaninny Paradise* / 2010"  
and "accession no 2011/E252 Western Australian Indigenous Art Awards 2011" in top right corner, Art Gallery of  
Western Australia registrar label "Danie Mellor / *Piccaninny Paradise* / 2010" in lower centre, exhibition centre  
label lower centre, Caruana & Reid Fine Art label "Danie Mellor / *Piccaninny Paradise* / 2010," DOOVER T.E.D  
Australia" shipping tag in top left and right corners

pencil, pastel, glitter, swarovski crystal and wash on saunders waterford paper

original gilt frame

165.5 x 192 cm

\$85,000

## PROVENANCE

Caruana & Reid Fine Art, 2010

Private Collection, Sydney

## EXHIBITED

*Non Sufficit Orbis*, Melbourne Art Fair in association with Caruana & Reid Fine Art, Melbourne, August 2010

Western Australian Art Awards, Art Gallery of Western Australia, August - December 2011

*Danie Mellor: Exotic Lies Sacred Ties*, University of Queensland Art Museum, TarraWarra Museum of Art, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory (MAGNT), May - November 2014. Curated by Maudie Palmer AO.

## LITERATURE

Elias, Ann, "Flower light," *Eyeline* 78 (2014): 35-41.

Elias, Ann, *Useless beauty: Flowers and Australian art*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015: 6.

Rivera-Santana, Carlos, *Archaeology of colonisation: From aesthetics to biopolitics*, Bloomsbury Publishing PLC, 2019: 161 (illus).

Mellor's large masterwork, *Piccaninny Paradise* (2010) exemplifies his practice of reimagining Australian colonial landscapes through a First Nations lens. Using pencil, pastel, glitter, Swarovski crystals, and wash, Mellor transforms the genteel medium of drawing into a powerful commentary on history, memory, and cultural inheritance. The work's opulence belies its complex critique of dispossession and mythmaking. Mellor, of Mamu and Ngagen / Ngajan heritage, plays a vital role in contemporary Australian art by challenging dominant narratives and asserting Indigenous presence within art historical traditions. His work bridges cultural perspectives, reshaping how Australia sees its past, and future, through aesthetics grounded in truth and reconciliation.

Michael Reid represented Danie Mellor for seven years, from 2007 to 2014.





## SELECTED COLLECTIONS

Adelaide Festival Centre, Australia

Art Gallery of New South Wales, Australia

Art Gallery of South Australia, Australia

Art Gallery of Western Australia, Australia

Artbank, Australia

Australian Museum, Australia

Australian National University, Australia

Brian and Gene Sherman, Australia

Cairns Regional Gallery, Australia

Campbelltown Arts Centre, Australia

Canberra Museum and Gallery, Australia

City of Sydney Art Collection, Australia

Dehua Porcelain Museum, China

Flinders University, Australia

Fondation Opale, Switzerland

Garangula Gallery, Australia

Holmes à Court Collection, Australia

Jean-Bernard Lafonta, France

Kerry Stokes Collection, Australia

Mallesons, Stephens, Jacques, Australia

Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery, Australia

Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Australia

Museum of Contemporary Art, Australia

Murdoch University Art Collection, Australia

Muswellbrook Regional Gallery, Australia

National Gallery of Australia, Australia

National Gallery of Canada, Canada

National Gallery of Victoria, Australia

National Museums Scotland, Scotland

Newcastle Region Art Gallery, Australia

New Parliament House Art Collection, Australia

Packer Collection, Australia

PLC Croydon, Australia

Queensland Art Gallery, Australia

Queensland Museum, Australia

Shepparton Regional Gallery, Australia

Sir Elton John Collection, England

The British Museum, United Kingdom

Tjabal Centre, ANU, Australia

Tuggeranong Arts Centre, Australia

University of Queensland Art Museum, Australia

Warnambool Art Gallery, Australia

Wesfarmers, Australia

Westpac, Australia

Wollongong Art Gallery, Australia





# GEORGE TJAMPU TJAPALTJARRI (c.1945 - 2005)

*Untitled, 2002*

signed verso : "George Tjampu Tjapaltjarri" inscribed middle left in black marker  
verso bears: "Papunya Tula Artists Pty Ltd" and centre catalogue number GT0210054 in black marker  
acrylic on linen  
153 x 122 cm  
\$8,000

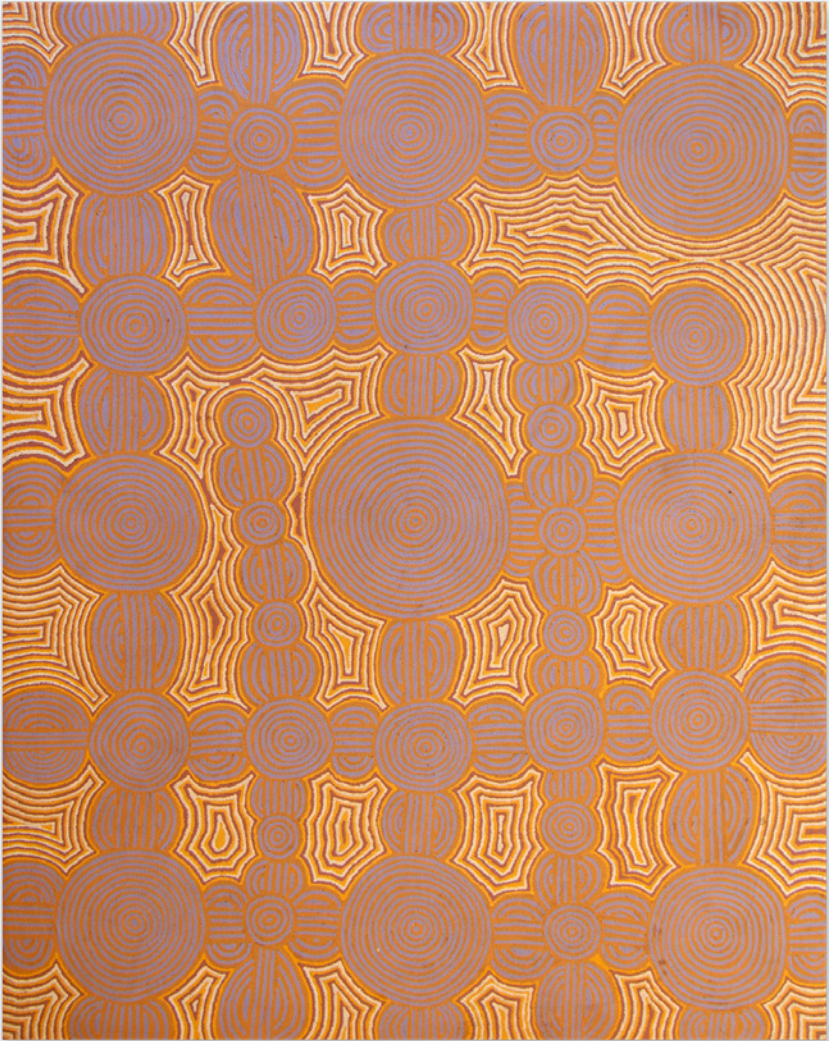
## PROVENANCE

Papunya Tula Artists Pty Limited, Northern Territory, Australia  
Private Collection, Australia

Born at Walla Walla rockhole (Pollock Hills) near Kiwirrkura in Western Australia circa 1945, George (Tjampu) Tjapaltjarri began painting for Papunya Tula Artists in 1983. The stories he painted relate to Tingari travels in his homeland. This painting depicts designs associated with the soakage water site of Tjangimanta, east of the Kiwirrkura Community in Western Australia.

## SELECTED COLLECTIONS

Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Australia  
National Gallery of Australia, Australia  
National Gallery of Victoria, Australia  
National Museum of Australia, Australia





TURKEY TOLSON TJUPURRULA (C.1938-2001)

*Untitled*, 1997  
signed verso: "Turkey Tolson Tjupurrula" inscribed middle right in black marker  
verso bears: "Papunya Tula Artists Pty Ltd" and centre catalogue number 9710066 in black marker  
acrylic on linen  
153 x 122 cm  
\$14,000

PROVENANCE

Papunya Tula Artists, Northern Territory, Australia  
Private Collection, Australia

Turkey Tolson was born near Haasts Bluff in the Northern Territory. After his initiation into manhood, his family moved to Papunya, where he lived during the early years of the painting movement. He joined Papunya Tula artists as one of its youngest members, painting his earliest artworks for Geoff Bardon in 1972.

During his early period, Turkey Tolson was one of the most innovative and figurative artists of the Papunya Tula movement. In the 1980s, he travelled to Paris with Joseph Jurra Tjapaltjarri to create a sand painting as part of the Peintres Aborigines d'Australie exhibition. He was elected Chairman of Papunya Tula in 1985 and held this role until 1995.

This painting depicts designs associated with the Two Travelling Women at the rockhole site of Munni Munni, south-east of the Kintore community. The women later journeyed north to Kintore and then north-west to Initi and Pinari. These two women travelled over vast areas of the western desert, stopping at many sites along the way. They sang the songs and performed the dances associated with the places they visited.

SELECTED COLLECTIONS

Art Gallery of New South Wales, Australia  
Art Gallery of South Australia, Australia  
National Gallery of Australia, Australia  
National Gallery of Victoria, Australia  
National Museum of Australia, Australia  
Queensland Art Gallery (QAGOMA), Australia  
Saint Louis Art Museum, United States



# BARDAYAL LOFTY NADJAMERREK AO (c.1926-2009)

*Dolkelorrkenlorrken*, c.2007

signed lower right: "Lofty"

reverse bears Injalak Arts & Crafts, Gunbalunya (Oenpelli), Northern Territory, catalogue number 3199-07

ochres on Arches paper

102 x 76 cm

\$11,000, framed

## PROVENANCE

Injalak Arts & Crafts, Gunbalunya (Oenpelli), Northern Territory, cat. no. 3199 07

Private collection, Australia

## LITERATURE

West, Margie K. C. (ed.), *Rainbow, Sugarbag and Moon: Two Artists of the Stone Country: Bardayal Nadjamerrek and Mick Kubarkku*, Museum & Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, 1995

Edwards, Deborah, & West, Margie, *Crossing Country - The Alchemy of Western Arnhem Land Art*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, 2004

Museum of Contemporary Art, Bardayal 'Lofty' Nadjamerrek AO, exhibition catalogue, Sydney, 2010

West, Margie, "Bardayal Nadjamerrek: Wild Honey Painter," *Art & Australia*, September 2008

Bardayal Lofty Nadjamerrek was a senior Kunwinjku artist of Western Arnhem Land, celebrated for evolving ancient rock art traditions into painted form. His late works on Arches paper — such as *Dolkelorrkenlorrken* — showcase his mastery of traditional ochre pigments on high-quality Western materials. The harmonious interplay of ancestral storytelling, rarrk (fine single-line hatching), and abstracted natural form exemplifies Nadjamerrek's innovative adaptation of country, culture, and technique. His cultural authority and artistic depth place him among the most significant Arnhem Land painters of his era.

## SELECTED COLLECTIONS

Art Gallery of New South Wales, Australia

Art Gallery of South Australia, Australia

Art Gallery of Western Australia, Australia

British Museum, United Kingdom

Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, University of Virginia,

Charlottesville, United States

Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Australia

Museum of Contemporary Art, Australia

National Gallery of Australia, Australia

National Gallery of Victoria, Australia

Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Australia





# KATHLEEN PETYARRE (1940-2018)

*Arnkerrth, Mountain Devil Lizard Dreaming, 1995*

signed upper left right: "Kathleen Petyarre"

verso bears: "Commission by Delmore" and catalogue number "95L50" inscribed in black marker

acrylic on linen

151 x 122 cm

\$22,000

## PROVENANCE

Hogarth Galleries, Australia

Private collection, Australia

In *Arnkerrth, Mountain Devil Lizard Dreaming* (1995), senior Anmatyerre artist Kathleen Petyarre maps the epic travels of Arnkerrth, the Mountain Devil Lizard and her totemic ancestor spirit. This work is rooted in Petyarre's custodial responsibilities for the Dreaming stories associated with her country in the Eastern Desert of the Northern Territory.

Rendered in fine layers of dots, the painting evokes the spiritual presence of Arnkerrth as it traverses the desert landscape, leaving behind traces in the sand and sacred sites imbued with ancestral power. Petyarre's dot work forms an aerial perspective, simultaneously representing topography, narrative movement, and ancestral memory. The painting captures both the physical geography and metaphysical dimensions of Country.

This work exemplifies Petyarre's unique visual language, developed over years of experimentation with layering, colour, and scale. While deeply grounded in traditional law, her practice also reflects a contemporary sensibility, bringing ancient narratives into the realm of global contemporary art.

## SELECTED COLLECTIONS

Aboriginal Art Museum, Utrecht, Netherlands

Art Gallery of South Australia, Australia

Essl Collection, Austria

Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, University of Virginia, United States

Metropolitan Museum of Art, United States

Musée des Confluences, France

Musée du Quai Branly, France

Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Australia

National Gallery of Australia, Australia

National Gallery of Victoria, Australia

Peabody Museum, Harvard University, United States

Queensland Art Gallery, Australia

Royal Collection of Queen Elizabeth II, United Kingdom

Seattle Art Museum, United States

The Kelton Foundation, United States





# DJIRRIIRA WUNUṆMURRA (YUKUWA)

Djirrirra Wunṁmurra (Yukuwa)

*Buyku*, 7110-23, 2023

natural ochre on board

202 cm x 124, irregular

\$21,000, framed

## PROVENANCE

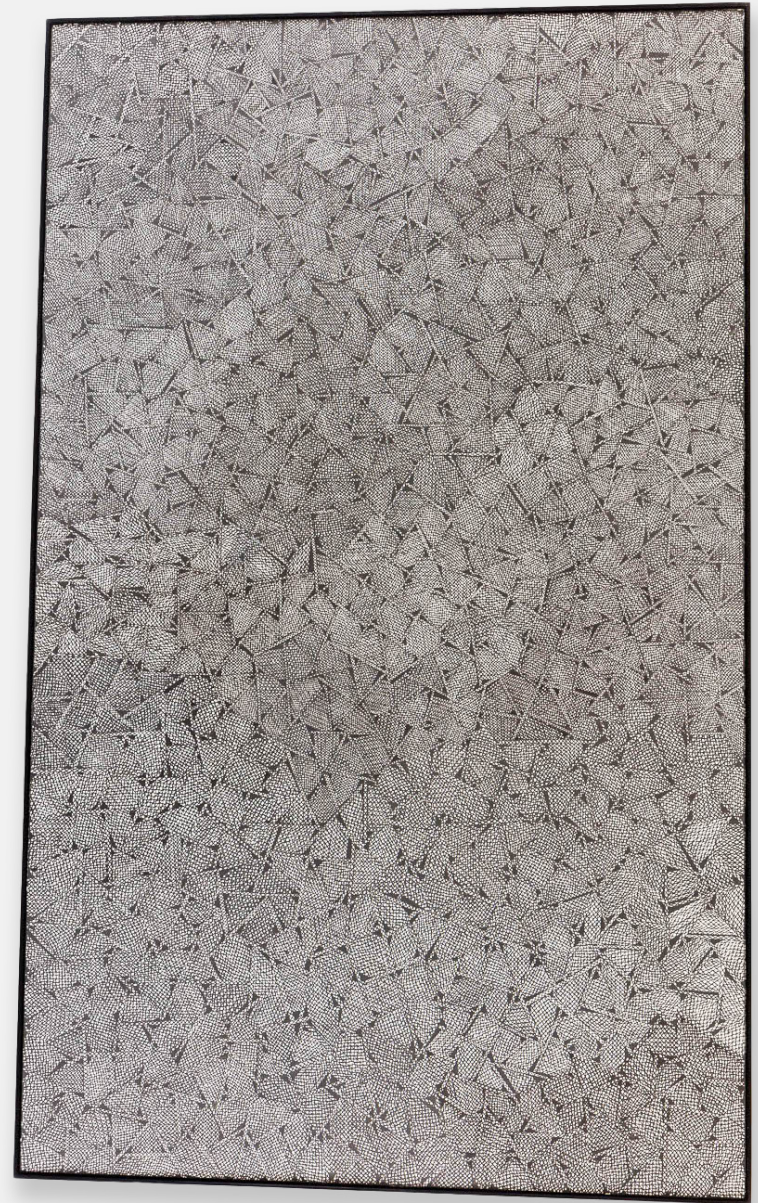
Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Centre, Northern Territory, Australia

Born in 1968, Djirrirra Wunṁmurra Yukuwa is a Yolṁu artist from the Dhalwaṇu clan in Gäṅgän, northeast Arnhem Land. She began her artistic journey assisting her father, the acclaimed artist Yanggarriny Wunṁmurra, on his 1997 Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award-winning painting. Following his death in 2003, she received cultural permission to continue painting with clan designs.

Wunṁmurra's work features precise geometric compositions exploring themes such as Buyku (fish traps). Through the shimmering interplay of crosshatching and personal motifs, she continues her family's sacred legacy while developing a distinctive visual language.

One reading of the work is the union between subgroups of the Dhalwangu clan during regular fishtrap ceremonies, the last of which occurred in 2018. The sacred diamond designs, generally referring to the waters around Gäṅgän, are encased in a strong grid of vertical and horizontal lines representing the fishtrap structure made during Mirrawarr (early Dry Season) from Rangan (paperbark) and wooden stakes. This Buyku, or fishtrap area, is 'company' land - shared by all who live by and sing the river. Participants in this song cycle and fishing activity hunt Baypinga (Saratoga), as does the Gany'tjurr (Reef Heron), the archetypal Yirritja hunter.

Awards include Winner of the TOGA Northern Territory Contemporary Art Award (2008) and Winner of the Bark Painting Prize, Telstra NATSIAA (2012), with multiple Telstra NATSIAA finalist placements.





1. Djirrirra Wunungmurra Yukuwa

Buyku (4894-24), 2024

Larrakitj

255 x 18 cm

\$16,000

2. Djirrirra Wunungmurra Yukuwa

Buyku (8795-21), 2021

Larrakitj

318 x 16 cm

\$16,500

## PROVENANCE

Buku-Larmggay Mulka Centre, Northern territory, Australia

## SELECTED COLLECTIONS

Art Gallery of New South Wales, Australia

Artbank, Australia

Australian Catholic University Art Collection, Australia

Kerry Stokes Collection, Australia

Kaplan Levi Collection, United States

Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Australia

National Gallery of Australia, Australia

Queensland Art Gallery and Gallery of Modern Art, Australia

The Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection of the University of Virginia, United States

Lavery Collection, Australia

TOGA Group Companies Art Collection, Australia

University of Newcastle Art Gallery Collection, Australia

Woodside Energy Ltd. Art Collection, Australia

1.



2.



# BETTY CHIMNEY & RAYLENE WALATINNA

*Nganampa Ngura (Our Country)*, 479-25, 2025

signed verso upper middle: "Betty Chimney + Raylene Walatinna"

verso bears: "479-25 198 x 243 cm" inscribed upper middle in black marker

acrylic on canvas

198 x 243 cm

\$29,000, framed

## PROVENANCE

Iwantja Arts, South Australia, Australia

Betty Chimney (born 1957) and her daughter, Raylene Walatinna (born 1973) are a Yankunytjatjara mother-daughter duo renowned for their vivid acrylic paintings that map the ancestral landscapes and stories of their homelands.

Working from Iwantja Arts in Indulkana, Betty Chimney draws on deep cultural knowledge to create intricate compositions reflecting waterholes, songlines, and the topography of Country. Her layered mark-making and vibrant palettes convey both the physical and spiritual essence of place.

Their collaboration reflects a vital intergenerational exchange. As Chimney expresses her own lived experiences and shares cultural knowledge, she continues the tradition of older women passing on Tjukurpa (ancestral stories) and ngura (Country) to younger generations. This dynamic process informs and inspires Walatinna's own creative voice.

In this large-scale collaborative painting, Chimney and Walatinna come together to articulate their shared connection to Country. Elements from Chimney's 2025 *Breaking Dawn* series are visible, with soft tones evoking a sensitive, luminous response to Country at first light. In contrast, Walatinna brings vibrance and exuberance to the canvas through her depiction of key landmarks - karu (creek), tjukitji (soakage), and Tjurki Tjukurpa (native owl ancestral story).

Their interwoven perspectives form a rich expression of Country as a living, responsive entity that is continuously rearticulated across generations.





# VICKI YATJIKI CULLINAN

*Ngayuku Ngura - My Country 522-23 2023*

signed verso upper centre: "Vicki Cullinan" in black marker

verso bears: "522-23 152 x 167 cm" inscribed upper centre in black marker

acrylic on canvas

152 x 167 cm

\$9,000, framed

## PROVENANCE

Iwantja Arts, South Australia, Australia

Vicki Yatjiki Cullinan is a senior Yankunytjatjara artist from Indulkana on the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands in South Australia. With a career spanning more than twenty years of practice at Iwantja Arts, she is also a respected community leader and cultural liaison. Her paintings, grounded in ancestral knowledge, often depict Dreaming stories connected to her Country.

In 2020, Cullinan won the Ravenswood Australian Women's Art Prize, and in 2023, she was awarded the Hadley's Art Prize for her painting *Ngayuku Ngura (My Country)*, cementing her place as a leading voice in contemporary First Nations art.

This work is accompanied by a certificate from Iwantja Arts which states:

I am a Yankunytjatjara woman from Indulkana Community on the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands in South Australia. I'm an artist at Iwantja Arts, where I started painting over 20 years ago.

My paintings are of Tjukurpa (ancestral stories) and ngura (country) that have cultural significance for me and my family. They are a combination of landscape - specific locations and landmarks - and representations of the sky and stars. For Anangu the stars hold Tjukurpa (Ancestral cultural stories) just like the country - the rockholes, hills and creeks - have Tjukurpa. One main one is the Kungkarangkalpa (Seven Sisters) Tjukurpa where a specific constellation represents the sisters and the cheeky man chasing after them.

I'm proud to be an artist and a leader in my community, working to keep our culture strong and passing on important knowledge to the next generations.

Michael Reid has worked with Iwantja Arts for over seven years.

## SELECTED COLLECTIONS

Art Gallery of New South Wales, Australia

National gallery of Victoria, Australia

Parliament House Collection, Australia



# EMILY CULLINAN

*Ananyi Ngura (Traveling Country), 267-25, 2025*

signed verso upper centre: "Emily Cullinan" inscribed in black marker

verso bears: " Iwantja Arts 267-25 167 x 152 cm" upper right corner inscribed in black marker

acrylic on canvas

167 x 152 cm

\$7,200

A senior artist at Iwantja Arts, Cullinan paints from lived experience, capturing memories of ancestral practices, seasonal cycles and journeys across Country. Her works convey personal and communal knowledge, contributing to the preservation and celebration of Anangu identity.

This work is accompanied by a certificate of authenticity from Iwantja Arts which states:

"Emily was born in rugged bush land, close to the Eastern APY community of Mimili. Her father was a respected cultural law man, and taught her and her two young sisters to live a traditional life. Emily did not encounter European settlers until she was a teenager.

Emily and her family used to travel long distances by walking or occasionally hitching wagons to camels and donkeys, they would camp at night inside hand built wiltjas (shelters) in the bush, sleeping in the warm sand.

The walk between Indulkana and Mimili regions took her 5 days, she recalls traveling this route many times to visit family. Emily's powerful paintings depict the iconic waterholes, majestic boulders, and river beds she would cross on her journey.

Iwantja Arts is an artist studio located within the remote Indigenous community of Indulkana, on the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands. Iwantja Arts is an Aboriginal corporation owned and governed by a board of directors. The art centre aims to encourage and support artistic excellence and cultural development within the community by providing opportunities, career development, and economic independence for practicing artists."

Cullinan's art has exhibited widely across Australia, including at Desert Mob (Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs, 2020), Tarnanthi: Festival of Contemporary Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art (Art Gallery of South Australia, 2020), Walka Wiru Ngangampa - Our Wonderful Paintings (Outstation Gallery, Darwin, 2021), Ananyi Ngura - Travelling Country (Michael Reid Northern Beaches, 2023), and Nganampa Ngura - Our Country, a mother-and-daughter show with Vicki Yatjiki Cullinan at Michael Reid Sydney (2024).

Michael Reid has worked with Iwantja Arts for more than seven years.

## SELECTED COLLECTIONS

Artbank, Australia

The Levi-Kaplan Collection, United States





# LEIGH NAMPONAN

*Apalech - Saltwater Country, 1/2, 2023*

earth pigments on linen

196 x 116.5 cm

\$11,000

## PROVENANCE

Wik & Kugu /Aurukun Art Centre, Queensland, Australia

JGM Gallery London, England

Private Collection, United States

## EXHIBITED

*Aak Keenkanan: From the Beginning*, JGM Gallery, July 5-August 14, 2023

Leigh Namponan was born in 1965 in Cairns and raised in Aurukun. He spent his childhood at an outstation south of Aurukun in his family's country. Namponan's work highlights ancestral totems of salt & freshwater animals and constellation subjects.

In this painting, Namponan depicts the saltwater country of Arukun, "The layers and texture that I paint are from my experience of walking and living in our Country. When I paint, I can show people a new way to see the Country."<sup>1</sup> Namponan's coarse brushwork in this painting visually corresponds to the texture and ephemeral materiality of Country.

Namponan's works of country look to reflect topographical changes, while honour ancestral connections "when I paint my Country, I show people the special connection we have to our waterways and forests. Our old people are still in our Country. We hear them singing to us through the birds and other animals that live there." For Namponan, his art helps to learn about Arukun culture and articulate his learnings around the world.<sup>2</sup>

1. Aak Keenkanam: From The Beginning JCM Gallery, accessed 25th September 2025, [https://issuu.com/jgmgallery/docs/aakkeenkanam\\_catalogue\\_master/s/27303249](https://issuu.com/jgmgallery/docs/aakkeenkanam_catalogue_master/s/27303249)

2. Leigh Namponan, Wik & Kugu Arts Centre, accessed 25th September 2025, <https://wikandkuguarts.com/artist/leigh-namponan-2/>

## SELECTED COLLECTIONS

Art Gallery of New South Wales, Australia

Queensland Art Gallery (QAGOMA), Australia





# NANCY JACKSON

*Tali, 2022*

acrylic on canvas

102 x 120.5 cm

\$9,000

## PROVENANCE

Warakurna Arts Centre, Catalogue number WARAI24-22, Western Australia, Australia

Aboriginal Contemporary Sydney, Australia

Private Collection, United States of America

Nancy Jackson began painting with Warakurna Artists around the time of its inception in 2005. This painting depicts the Tali or sandhill formations of her country. The tjukurpa story that is associated with these depictions however is a secret. Her country is located close to the community of Patjarr and she was born in the bush at a site called Kirritji, her grandfather's traditional country. Nancy is a senior cultural woman in Warakurna community and is respected and trusted for her knowledge of country and Tjukurpa.

## SELECTED COLLECTIONS

Artbank, Australia

National Gallery of Australia, Australia

Lagerberg Swift Collection, Australia

National Museum of Australia, Australia

The Kelton Foundation, United States

The National Gallery of Victoria, Australia





# IMELDA (YUKENBARRI) GUGAMAN

*Winpurpurla, 2020*

acrylic on canvas

102 x 152 cm

\$10,000

## PROVENANCE

Warlayirti Art Centre, Certificate number 641/20, Western Australia, Australia

Aboriginal Contemporary Gallery, Sydney, Australia

Private collection, United States of America

## EXHIBITED

Luumpu (Kingfisher Dreaming), Aboriginal Contemporary Gallery, 2022

Imelda is the first child of Lucy Yukenbarri and Helicopter Tjungurrayi. In this painting, she depicts her mother's country south of Balgo in the Great Sandy Desert called Winpurpurla, named after a tjurnu (soakwater).

Winpurpurla is an inta (living water) place, so it always has good water. Imelda's mother passed the story of three skin groups travelling to Winpurpurla to collect a variety of kumpupatja (bush tomato), which, when exposed to sun, change to the off-white colour and are ready to harvest. They also came to harvest bush raisins, represented by the orange dots.<sup>1</sup>

Gugaman's work is renowned for her merging of individual dots to create textural fields of colour. Surrounding this story of abundance in Winpurpurla, Gugaman offers a view of the undulations of sandhills, with sharp shifts in the line directions to the left of these indicating a change in land formation or vegetation.

<sup>1</sup> Imelda Gugaman, Short St Gallery, <https://www.shortstgallery.com.au/exhibitions/132/works/artworks-845765-imelda-yukenbarri-gugaman-winpurpurla-bushtucker-2022/>

## SELECTED COLLECTIONS

Art Gallery of Western Australia, Australia

Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art (QAGOMA), Australia



# RAMMEY RAMSEY (1935-2021)

*Untitled, 2008*  
ochre and pigments on canvas  
180 x 150 cm  
\$26,000

## PROVENANCE

Jirrawun/Warmun Arts JA 329-08, Western Australia  
Redot Gallery, Singapore  
Private collection, United States of America

Rammey Ramsey is a senior Gija artist from Jirrawun, in the East Kimberley region of Western Australia. His work draws on a deep connection to his ancestral country, Warlawoon, incorporating a distinctive visual language of bold shapes and spatial compositions that map out country, rivers, hills, and important cultural sites.

In this painting, forms represent places of significance, such as waterholes (jila), rocky outcrops, and living areas, outlined in dotted lines that reflect traditional Gija iconography. The central blue circle may refer to a water source, with surrounding shapes indicating travel routes, rock formations, or meeting places. The abstracted geometry and controlled mark-making are characteristic of Ramsey's style, where memory, experience, and country are embedded in each form.

## SELECTED COLLECTIONS

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, New Zealand  
Ian Potter Museum of Art, Melbourne  
Museum of Contemporary Art, Australia  
National Gallery of Victoria, Australia  
Wesfarmers Collection of Australian Art, Australia





# CHARLIE TJAPANGATI (1949-2021)

*Untitled, 2002*  
acrylic on canvas  
168 x 46 cm  
\$14,000, framed

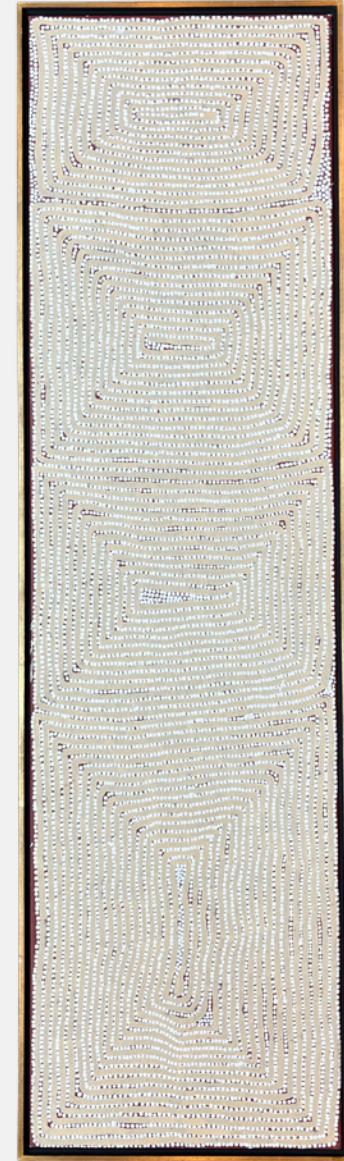
## PROVENANCE

Papunya Tula, catalogue number CT0201050, Northern Territory, Australia  
Scott Livesey Art Gallery, Australia  
Private collection, United States

Tjapangati, a Pintupi man, began painting for Papunya Tula in 1977, joining the cooperative in its formative years and aligning himself with the first generation of Western Desert artists. During this period, Tjapangati worked to translate ceremonial and sand-painting traditions to works on canvas, ensuring the preservation and wider recognition of these cultural narratives.

## SELECTED COLLECTIONS

Aboriginal Art Museum, The Netherlands  
Art Gallery of South Australia, Australia  
Art Gallery of Western Australia, Australia  
Artbank, Australia  
Flinders University Art Museum, Australia  
Kelton Foundation Collection, United States  
Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection University of Virginia, Unites States  
Macquarie Group Collection, Australia  
Museums & Art Galleries of the Northern Territory, Australia  
National Museum of Australia, Australia  
Queensland Art Gallery, Australia  
Robert Holmes à Court Collection, Australia  
Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Australia  
National Gallery of Victoria, Australia



# OWEN YALANDJA

*Yawk yawk, 1997*

natural earth pigments on wood

127 × 12 × 12 cm

\$8,000

## PROVENANCE

Maningrida Arts & Culture, Northern territory, Australia

MLC Collection, Australia

Insignia Financial Collection, Australia

Private Collection, Australia

*SH265 A Corporate Collection of Australian and International Art*, Shapiro Auctioneers, February 18 2025, Lot No. 37.

Michael Reid Gallery Sydney, Australia

## EXHIBITED

*Spirit in Variation* - Annandale Galleries, Sydney, 1997





Owen Yalandja

*Ngalkodjek Yawkyawk, 485-25, 2025*

verso bears: Maningrida Arts Centre label "OWEN YALANDJA / Ngalkodjek Yawkyawk / 485-25" in upper right corner

stringybark (eucalyptus tetradonta) with ochre pigment and PVA fixative

63 x 23 cm, irregular

\$11,000

## PROVENANCE

Maningrida Arts & Culture, Northern territory, Australia



A Kuninjku artist from Maningrida in Western Arnhem Land, Owen Yalandja is celebrated for his wooden sculptures depicting Yawkyawk spirits - female water beings central to his cultural heritage. Known for his dynamic carving and intricate dot-painting techniques, Yalandja transforms timber into flowing, sacred forms. His innovative adaptations of ceremonial iconography have elevated his work onto national and international stages.

This figure depicts the Ngalkodjek Yawkyawk of Barrihdjowkkeng country.

“This story is very old.. They (Yawkyawk spirits) call out loudly as they walk along, eating traditional bush foods like small bush yams.. That old man [my father Crusoe Kuningbal] when he was alive, told that story to me, to all of us.. He told us about the Yawkyawk (mermaid) spirit women called Ngalkodjek who live in the billabong on my country...

...When they walk down from the bush, they follow a set path that belongs to them, calling out along the way. This is their traditional route.

They placed a woman's breast into the country - a sacred site (djang). When non-Aboriginal people arrived in the region, the breast turned to stone. Now it has become rock”

— Owen Yalandja

Major exhibitions include Venice Biennale (1997), *Crossing Country: The Alchemy of Western Arnhem Land Art* (Art Gallery of New South Wales, 2004), *The Heart of Everything: Western Arnhem Land Art* (Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, 2017), and The 24th Biennale of Sydney (2024).

Awards include Winner of the Bark Painting Award, Telstra NATSIAA (2023) and Winner of the 3D Memorial Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award (2025), cementing his place among the most acclaimed contemporary bark painters in Australia. In 2026, Yalandja will be a key voice in the National Museum of Australia's major touring exhibition Water Spirits.

Michael Reid has represented Owen Yalandja for five years, having worked with Maningrida Arts & Culture for more than 20 years.

## SELECTED COLLECTIONS

Aboriginal Art Museum, The Netherlands  
Aimee Proost Private Collection, Australia  
Art Gallery of New South Wales, Australia  
Art Gallery of South Australia, Australia  
Artbank, Australia  
Australian Museum, Australia  
Bargehouse Gallery, United Kingdom  
Coopers & Lybrand Collection, Netherlands  
David Betz Private Collection, United States  
Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, United States  
Gantner Myer Collection, United States

Helen Read Collection, Australia  
Lavery Collection, Australia  
Macquarie Bank Art Collection, Australia  
Musee des Confluences, France  
Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Australia  
National Gallery of Australia, Australia  
National Gallery of Victoria, Australia  
Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Australia  
Walonia Aboriginal Art, The Netherlands  
William and Lucy Mora Private Collection, Australia

Owen Yalandja (pictured) in front of his National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award 3D winning piece, *Ngalkodjek Yawkyawk*, 2025.  
Image Credit: Charlie Bliss





# LESHAYE SWAN

*Untitled, (296-25AS), 2025*

stoneware with sgraffito

50 x 34 x 34 cm

\$3,400

## PROVENANCE

APY Gallery, South Australia, Australia

LeShaye was born in Alice Springs in 2001 and is a Yankunytjatjara woman. At the age of one her grandmother, fellow artist Sandra Pumani brought LeShaye to Mimilli, a remote aboriginal community on the APY Lands in South Australia. From the age of one Leshay was raised on country by Sandra and the Pumani family.

In this work, Swan vibrantly depicts the bottlebrush (Callistemon), a plant celebrated for its vivid colour, cultural resonance, and resilience. A flared lip and organic contour, the form evokes the classical amphora while being grounded in contemporary ceramic practice. Swan's surface treatment combines sgraffito techniques with layered underglaze, slip, and oxides, creating a densely textured effect. The artist's use of earthy reds, ochres, greens, and blacks connects the work to the Australian bush, while the luscious gloss glaze accentuates both the natural motifs and the tactile depth of the clay.



JOSINA PUMANI

*untitled (Maralinga) (480-25AS), 2025*  
hand-built stoneware, underglaze  
42 x 41 x 43 cm (16.5" x 16.1" x 16.9")  
\$4,200

PROVENANCE

APY Gallery, South Australia, Australia

Josina Pumani has been told the story of Maralinga since she was a little girl. 'My family were hurt by the bombs,' she explains. 'Many Anangu got sick or died, including my uncle Yami Lester, who was blinded by the bomb.'

Using the coil method to build her vessel, Pumani has given form to the British atomic weapons testing program undertaken in remote South Australia during the 1950s and 1960s. The effects of these tests were severe and have had lasting impacts on Anangu. She uses a vibrant red to represent the poison from the bombs and the internal grey to refer to the smoke. The texture and detailed depictions on the exterior form includes punu (trees), circling toxic winds, and Anangu gathering in a wiltja (shelter).

Pumani works through the APY Art Centre Collective's Tarntanya/Adelaide studio and has been making ceramics since 2024.

ART GALLERY OF NEW SOUTH WALES





# HISTORICAL WONNARUA GROUPING

Maker unknown

*A Nulla Nulla or Wadi, A Finely Engraved Hunting & Ceremonial Boomerang and A Hunting Boomerang, late 19th Century, or early 20th Century*

dense hardwood

63 cm, 68.5 cm , 66 cm

\$10,800, with stands

## PROVENANCE

The Wonnarua people of Murrurundi, Upper Hunter New South Wales and its surrounds

Acquired in the Upper Hunter Valley of New South Wales, at Murrurundi, between the years 1929 and 1933 by Mr. Henry Cooke "Bennie" Dent. Mr Dent was Stud Master at Harben Vale, a significant grazing property owned by Mr. Frederick White, and hence by direct decent from Mr. Dent to Ms. Cherry Ripe food writer, journalist, broadcaster, and author of Sydney.

The necessary tools and equipment used for hunting, fishing, and warfare, were some of the few items that Aboriginal communities carried with them from place to place. To be an object carried was to be important, to the needs of the individual and community.

Most objects were used for a multiplicity of purposes. Because many were made from raw natural materials, such as wood, generally only partial remains are found today. Far more significant however, than the rarity of finding such a wooden artefact intact, this Nulla Nulla and boomerangs have two major attributes rarely found in combination: these being the impact on the weapon made by early European contact and the know, highly specific provenance as to the objects place of discovery and time.

As early 19th century European settlement wound its way up the Upper Hunter Valley of New South Wales and impacted on the Wonnarua people of Murrurundi and its surrounds, historically, the first impact between peoples can often be found in the trading or acquisition of iron. Axes of all types, horseshoe nails, tough useable ironwork capable of being immediately used by First Nations people. This Nulla Nulla sees the incorporation of early horseshoe nails into the head of the club, and this would indicate that at the time of reconstruction this club this object was intended to be used for its traditional purpose. The boomerangs, one being a hunter's weapon, designed to specifically bring down large game on the hop. The other being ceremonial, as a finely carved men's object used in ceremony, for men's eyes only. A fine and important example of an Indigenous artifact that is prized on many levels.



# AN EXCEPTIONAL WUNDA SHIELD

**Maker unknown**  
**carved and engraved hardwood and natural pigment**  
**77 x 19 cm**  
**\$7,000, with stand**

## PROVENANCE

Reputedly collected in the Coolgardie region, Western Australia, Australia  
Private collection, Australia

This particularly strong Wunda Shield is an elongated ovoid form, the front decorated with fluted linear designs divided into three sections to form a zig-zag motif infilled alternately with red and black earth pigments. The reverse of the Wunda Shield is marked with fine fluted linear engraving and a raised loop handle.

## RELATED WORKS

Wunda Shield, Western Australian, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, USA, accession number: 1979.206.1532

Adorned with bold zigzag patterns consisting of a series of longitudinal grooves accented with red and black ocher, Wunda Shields were once used across a large portion of the vast state of Western Australia. Like many forms of Aboriginal Shields, Wunda were used in fighting for protection against projectile weapons, such as spears and boomerangs. They were also carried by performers in ritual contexts, especially when re-enacting specific male ancestral stories.

The formal layout of the designs on Wunda Shields occurs in two basic patterns. In the first, known as pandal, which is seen on the present work, the lines in the upper and lower registers of the shield are arranged vertically along the axis of the shield, while those in the central register appear at an oblique angle. In the second, called pangkurda, the lines in the upper and lower registers run obliquely and those in the central section are horizontal. Zigzag designs in Western Australia appear to have been widely associated with rain and water. Broad patterns formed from nested zigzag motifs, such as those that appear on the Wunda Shields, are variously interpreted as representing ripple marks on the sand, floodwaters, or the ripples made by the wind on the surface of large bodies of water.





# JENNIFER PRUDENCE

*Mun-dirra / fish fence (1091-24), 2024*  
pandanus (pandanus spiralis) and natural dyes  
250 x 107 cm  
\$5,000

## PROVENANCE

Maningrida Arts and Culture, Northern Territory, Australia

Jennifer Prudence is a Burarra fibre artist living in Maningrida. Jennifer works predominantly with locally harvested pandanus (pandanus spiralis) that she dyes with natural colours derived from the roots, leaves or flowers of plants found in the surrounding country.

She was taught to weave by her sister, master weaver Lorna Jin-gubarrangunyja, and is now herself an accomplished maker of An-gujechiya (Fish Trap), Burlupurr (Dilly bags), circular woven mats and earrings.

Prudence was one of 13 artists who produced “Mun-Dirra” for the 2023 NGV Triennial Exhibition, a monumental installation of ten 10m long woven pandanus fish net fences; taking close to 2 years to complete, it is the largest commissioned fibre work in Australia.

## SELECTED COLLECTIONS

National Gallery of Victoria, Australia



# THE STARS BEFORE US ALL

Australian First Nations Art

MICHAEL REID

SYDNEY

BERLIN

BEYOND

For all enquiries, please contact:

Sydney  
Toby Meagher  
tobymeagher@michaelreid.com.au  
0413 925 206

Berlin  
colinesoria@michaelreid.com.au