

PAINTING THE COUNTRY

Tracking the kingfisher songline from the western desert to Uluru with a group of internationally acclaimed artists and custodians from Balgo Hills



1 Hour HDTV Documentary

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Artists' Biographies

The intention is to take 5 male and 5 female artists on the trip in order that sites and country relating to both men and women can be painted and recorded. The final details of whom will go is under discussion but the following will definitely be part of the trip because of their custodial links to that country and dreaming.

They are all highly regarded artists.

BAI BAI NAPANGNARTI

Born: 1. 7.1939
Location: Tjawa Tjawa (Pt Moody)
Skin: Napangarti
Language: Kukatja and Ngarti



SELECTED DETAILS OF ARTIST'S WORKING LIFE

Medium and Themes

Acrylic paint on canvas and linen

Hair belt spinning story, echidna, crow, kangaroo, dingo, native cat and bush carrot

Waterholes and claypans

Snakes

Biography

Bai Bai is a senior Law Woman of Balgo. Her country extends from Mangkayi in the Stansmore Ranges to just south of Yagga Yagga. Bai Bai has travelled extensively for cultural reasons. She spent her youth and early adult years travelling through her family's land learning traditional law and culture. She began to paint in 1986 in Balgo and since then has also introduced younger members of her family to painting. She has been involved in several publications including Yarrtji: Six women's stories from The Great Sandy Desert, 1997 Aboriginal Studies Press, Canberra, which was short listed for the NSW Premier's History Awards in 1998. Bai Bai is a long serving member of the Kimberley Land Council, and a strong practitioner of women's law and culture in Balgo.

Exhibitions

1999, *Miliynyin*, Japingka Gallery, Fremantle

1998, *15th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards*, Museum and

Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin

1997, *New Painting by Balgo Women*, Vivien Anderson Gallery, Melbourne

1997, *Daughters of the Dreaming: Sisters Together Strong*, Art Gallery of Western

Australia, Perth

1995, *New Works By the Artists of Balgo Hills*, Coe-ee Aboriginal Art, Sydney

1994, *Aboriginal Desert Women's Law*, Ballarat Fine Art Gallery, Victoria

1994, *Aboriginal Desert Women's Law*, A.R.T. Collins Place Gallery, Melbourne

1994, *Desert Spirit Paintings*, Channing Gallery, Santa Fe, USA

1993, *Images of Power: Aboriginal Art of the Kimberley*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

1991, *Yapa: Peintres Aborigenes de Balgo et Lajamanu*, Baudon Lebon Gallery, Paris

1991, *Aboriginal Art and Spirituality*, High Court, Canberra

1990, *Recent Balgo Paintings*, Dreamtime Gallery, Perth, WA

1989, *Balgo Paintings*, Robert Steele Gallery, Adelaide, SA

1989, *Balgo Painting*, Dreamtime Gallery, Perth, WA

1989, *Recent Paintings from Balgo*, Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne, Victoria

1988, *Art from Balgo Hills*, Birukmarri Gallery, Fremantle, WA

1986, *Art From the Great Sandy Desert*, Art Gallery of WA, Perth

Collections

Morven Estate

Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth

Berndt Museum of Anthropology, University of Western Australia

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

The Holmes á Court Collection, Perth

Kluge-Ruhe Collection, USA

Kelton Collection, USA

Laverty Collection

National Gallery of Victoria

LUCY YUKENBARRI

Born 1934
Location Kuntawarra?
Skin Napanangka
Language group Kukatja

SELECTED DETAILS OF ARTIST'S WORKING LIFE

Medium and Themes

Chromacryl
Student's acrylic on cotton duck
Acrylic on one ply
Acrylic on canvas and linen
Goanna, bush turkey, bush fruit
Camp sites, waterholes
Tingarri

Biography

Lucy is respected as a senior custodian with a vast knowledge of the waterholes in the Great Sandy Desert. She works diligently at her paintings, which are boldly covered in thick dabs of paint. Lucy concentrates on painting the soaks and rockholes of her country. She also paints numerous types of bush food including Kantilli (bush raisins) and purra (bush tomato). Lucy laughs as she describes herself as a "wild one" in her youth running away from ceremonial business into the bush. There is also the story of the long walk in from the desert to the mission where they would stop at wells along the track to pump for water. Once at the mission she helped make bread and later began painting. She has travelled extensively with her painting (Melbourne, Sydney, Canberra, Perth, Darwin, Kununurra) however prefers to stay in Balgo with her family.

Solo Exhibitions

1999, Tjurrnu –Living Water, Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne

Group Exhibitions

1999, 16th National ATSI Art Awards, Museum Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
1999, East Kimberley Art Awards, Kununurra Arts Council, Kununurra
1999, 30th Alice Price, Araluen Centre, Alice Springs
1999, Mularrpa (True) Balgo, Framed the Darwin Gallery, Darwin
1999, Miliynyin, Hogarth Galleries, Sydney
1999, Miliynyin, Japingka Gallery, Fremantle
1998, Culture Store, Art Gallery, Rotterdam, The Netherlands
1998, Ngurrara – My own Country, Hogarth galleries, Sydney

1998, *Art Gallery Baehr, Speyer, Germany*
 1998, *Dreamings, Spazio Pitti Arte, Florence, Italy*
 1998, *The Lavery Collection, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney*
 1998, *Dreamings, Vlaams-Europeesch Conferentiecentrum, Brussels, Belgium*
 1998, *Hilton Hotel Art Gallery, Rotterdam, The Netherlands*
 1997, *Gallery Gondwana, Alice Springs*
 1997, *Big Balgos - Recent Paintings by Warlayirti Artists, Hogarth Galleries, Sydney*
 1997, *New Painting by Balgo Women, Vivien Anderson Gallery, Melbourne*
 1997, *Dreamings, Arnhem, Netherlands*
 1997, *Goteborgs Konstforening, Goteborg, Sweden*
 1997, *Innenseite - Projektgruppe Stoffwechsel, Kassel & Gottingen, Germany*
 1997, *Desert Country, Matso's, Broome*
 1994, *Wirrimanu: Aboriginal Art from Balgo, Framed Gallery, Darwin, NT*
 1994, *The Eleventh National Aboriginal Art Award Exhibition, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin*
 1994, *Power of the Land, Masterpieces of Aboriginal Art, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne*
 1993, *Images of Power, Aboriginal Art of the Kimberley, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne*
 1993, *Aboriginal Art Exhibition, Kung Gubunga, Oasis Gallery, Broadbeach, QLD*
 1991, *Paintings by Senior Women from the Western Desert, Vivien Anderson Gallery, Melbourne, Victoria*
 1990, *Warlayirti Artists, Birukmarri Gallery, Fremantle, WA*
 1989, *The Sixth National Aboriginal Art Award Exhibition, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin*

Collections



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Artbank, Sydney

Campbelltown City Art Gallery
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
The Holmes a Court Collection, Perth
Lavery Collection
Berndt Museum of Anthropology UWA

Awards

1999, *WARINGARRI ARTS AWARD, East Kimberley Art Awards, Kununurra Arts Council,*

HELICOPTER TJUNGARRAYI

Born: c1937
Location: Ninmi
Skin: Tjungarrayi
Language Group: Kukatja

SELECTED DETAILS OF ARTIST'S WORKING LIFE

Medium and Themes

Chromacryl
students acrylics on cotton duck
acrylic paint on canvas
acrylic on linen
Pipar Country- his mother's country
Ninmi country- his father's country
Tingarri
Soakwaters

Biography

Helicopter is senior lawman, healer and a respected painter alongside his wife Lucy Yukenbarri.. When Helicopter first started painting he used the name Joey Tjungarrayi. In the early 1990's he painted with his wife not seeking any acknowledgment. Since 1994 Helicopter has been painting on his own again in a distinctive linear style that emanates around the central feature of a soak water. Helicopter travelled widely during the mission days to pick up supplies (Broome, Alice Springs, Wyndham) There are many stories of the endless tasks performed on the Mission; drilling for water, cutting timber for fencing, fixing the windmill. More recently Helicopter has travelled with his painting to Darwin and Melbourne. He remains dedicated to painting his country and the country of his mother and father where he lived a nomadic life as a young boy.

Solo Exhibitions

1999, Tjurrnu –Living Water, *Alcaston Gallery , Melbourne*

Group Exhibitions

1999, *16th National ATSI Art Awards, Museum Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin*
1999, *East Kimberley Art Awards, Kununurra Arts Council, Kununurra*
1999, *Desert mob '99, Araluen Centre, Alice Springs*
1999, *30th Alice Price, Araluen Centre, Alice Springs*

1999, Mularrpa (True) Balgo, *Framed the Darwin Gallery, Darwin*
1999, Miliynyin, *Hogarth Galleries, Sydney*
1999, Miliynyin, *Japingka Gallery, Fremantle*
1998, Culture Store, *Art Gallery, Rotterdam, The Netherlands*
1998, Ngurrara – My own Country, *Hogarth galleries, Sydney*
1998, Dreamings, *Spazio Pitti Arte, Florence, Italy*
1998, Balgo Men, *Vivien Anderson Gallery, Melbourne*
1998, *Hilton Hotel Art Gallery, Rotterdam, The Netherlands*
1998, Dreamings, *Vlaams-Europeesch Conferentiecentrum, Brussels, Belgium*
1997, *Gallery Gondwana, Alice Springs*
1997, New Paintings From Balgo Artists, *Vivien Anderson Gallery, Melbourne*
1997, Big Balgos - Recent Paintings by Warlayirti Artists, *Hogarth Galleries, Sydney*
1997, Dreamings, *Arnhem, Netherlands*
1997, *Innenseite - Projektgruppe Stoffwechsel, Kassel & Gottingen, Germany*
1997, Desert Country, *Matso's, Broome*

Collections

1997, *Gantner Myer Collection*
Laverty Collection

Awards

1999, *Special Commendations, East Kimberley Art Awards, Kununurra Arts Council,*

JOHN LEE TJAKAMARRA

Born 18/4 /1956
Location Wirramanu
Skin Tjakamarra
Languages Kukatja, Ngardi

Selected Details of Artist's Working Life

Medium and Themes

Chromacryl

acrylic paint on canvas

Father's country near Kiwikurra

Two Tjukurrpa (Dreamtime) ancestors; Tjangala and Tjapanangka

Ancestral Snake

Kudiji (initiation) Ceremony

Biography

John's story is an interesting one as he has only launched into his painting career in 1999. Before this he had been involved in ceremonial painting and produced only a couple of paintings in 1993 and 1995. John is the son of Donkeyman Lee who was a senior lawman and a reputable painter. He believes that while his father was still alive it was not necessary for him to paint but since Donkeyman's death he has accepted his role to pass on the family heritage. John's paintings have emerged in a distinctive style with the predominance of a black ground giving them a strikingly bold appearance. John emphasises the need to sit and listen and learn from nature, from the country where he gains his wisdom. Being a strong representative for the community, John is an articulate spokesperson. He sees himself as a bridge builder through his ability to communicate across cultures.

MATI (BRIDGET) MUDJIDELL

Born: c.1935
Location:
Skin: Napanangka
Language: Ngarti, also speaks Kukatja and Walpirri

SELECTED DETAILS OF ARTIST'S WORKING LIFE

Medium and Themes

Chromacryl
students acrylics on cotton duck
acrylic paint on canvas

Biography

One of the major Law Women at Wirrimanu. Mati has also been involved in several publications such as Yarrtji: Six women's stories from the Great Sandy Desert, 1997
Aboriginal Studies Press CANBERRA short-listed for the NSW Premier's History Awards in 1998.

Group Exhibitions

1999, East Kimberley Art Awards, Kununurra Arts Council, Kununurra
1999, Miliynyin, Hogarth Galleries, Sydney
1999, Miliynyin, Japingka Gallery, Fremantle
1998, Dreamings, Spazio Pitti Arte, Florence, Italy
1998, The Laverty Collection, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney
1997, Gallery Gondwana, Alice Springs
1997, New Paintings from Balgo Artists, Vivien Anderson Gallery, Melbourne
1997, New Paintings by Balgo Women, Vivien Anderson Gallery, Melbourne
1997, Dreamings, Arnhem, Netherlands
1997, Daughters of the Dreaming - Sisters Together Strong, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
1994, Wirrimanu: Aboriginal Art from Balgo, Framed Gallery, Darwin, NT
1994, INDIGENART GALLERY
1993, Aboriginal Art Exhibition, Kung Gubunga, Oasis Gallery, Broadbeach, QLD
1991, Warlayirti Artists Form Balgo Hills, WA, Hogarth Gallery, Sydney
1991, Yapa, Peintres Aborigenes de Balgo et Lajamanu, Baudon Lebon Gallery, Paris

1991, Aboriginal Art and Spirituality, *High Court, Canberra*
1990, Songlines – Paintings from Balgo Hills, *Rebecca Hossack Gallery, London*
1989, Warlayirti Artists Continuing Links with Land, *Coo-ee Aboriginal Art, Sydney*
1989, Balgo Paintings, *Robert Steele Gallery, Adelaide, SA*
1989, Recent Paintings from Balgo, *Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne, Victoria*
1989, *Balgo Painting, Dreamtime Gallery, Perth*

Collections

1997, *Morven Estate*
The Kelton Foundation, Santa Monica, USA
Laverty Collection



SAM TJAMPITJIN

Born: c. 1930
Location:
Skin: Tjampitjin
Language: Kukatja

SELECTED DETAILS OF ARTIST'S WORKING LIFE

Medium and Themes

Chromacryl
Students acrylics on cotton duck
Acrylic paint on canvas

Biography

Group Exhibitions

1999, 24th Annual Shell Fremantle Print award, Fremantle Arts Centre, Fremantle
1999, Miliynyin, Hogarth Galleries, Sydney
1998, Culture Store, Art Gallery, Rotterdam, The Netherlands
1998, Ngurrara – My own Country, Hogarth galleries, Sydney
1998, Dreamings, Spazio Pitti Arte, Florence, Italy
1998, Dreamings, Vlaams-Europeesch Conferentiecentrum, Brussels, Belgium
1997, Gallery Gondwana, Alice Springs
1997, National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
1997, Dreamings, Arnhem, Netherlands
1997, Desert Country, Matso's, Broome

1994, The Eleventh National Aboriginal Art Award Exhibition, *Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin*

1990, *The Singing Earth, Chapman Gallery, Canberra*

1990, *Paintings from Kukatja Country, Deutscher Brunswick Street, Melbourne, Victoria*

1990, *Paintings from Balgo, Hogarth Gallery, Sydney*

Collections

Artbank, Sydney

The Holmes a Court Collection, Perth

Kluge Collection USA

Laverty Collection

Awards

1999, *Highly Commended, 24th Annual Shell Fremantle Print award, Fremantle Arts Centre,*

TJUMPO TJAPANANGKA

Born 1929
Location Muruwar, north of Kiwirrkurra
Skin Tjapanangka
Language Kukatja, Pintubi

SELECTED DETAILS OF ARTIST'S WORKING LIFE

Medium and Themes

Chromacryl
Acrylic on cotton duck
Acrylic paint on canvas and linen
Water, rainmaking, soaks
Wati Kutjarra
Rainbow snakes
Bandicoot, flying ant, dingo spirit, Kangaroo
Tingarri

Biography

Tjumbo is a senior law man and also a Maparn (healer). Incredibly fit and strong for his age, Tjumbo attributes this to his diet of bush food. He speaks adamantly of his childhood in the desert hunting for goanna, porcupine, wallaby, pussy cat, and the construction of spinifex and mud shelters for the wet season. Tjumbo being very sociable loves to meander and chat between bouts of painting. His work resonates with power through the formal application of paint. Tjumbo is a respected speaker for the community.

Group Exhibitions

1998, 15th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
1997, Big Balgos - Recent Paintings by Warlayirti Artists, Hogarth Galleries, Sydney
1997, Dreamings, Arnhem, Netherlands
1991, Aboriginal Art and Spirituality, High Court Canberra
1990, Aboriginal Art Exhibition, Dreamtime Gallery, Broadbeach, QLD
1990, Paintings from Balgo, WA, Hogarth Gallery, Sydney
1990, Songlines – Paintings from Balgo Hills, Rebecca Hossack Gallery, London
1990, Contemporary Aboriginal Art from the Robert Holmes a Court Collection, Touring the USA
1990, L'ete Australien a' Montpellier, Musee Fabre Gallery, Montpellier, France
1989, Muthscapes, Aboriginal Art of the Desert, National Gallery of Victoria
1989, Warlayirti Artists, Bikumarri Gallery, Fremantle, WA
1989, Warlayirti Artists Continuing Links with Land, Coo- ee Aboriginal Art, Sydney

Awards

1997, Gantner Myer Collection
1997, Morven Estate
Art Gallery of Western Australia Perth
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne,
The Holmes a Court Collection, Perth
Laverty Collection

NELLIE NJAMME

Born:

Location:

Skin:

Language:

SELECTED DETAILS OF ARTIST'S WORKING LIFE

Medium and Themes

Chromacryl

students acrylics on cotton duck

acrylic paint on canvas

Biography

Group Exhibitions

1999, East Kimberley Art Awards, Kununurra Arts Council, Kununurra

1999, Desert mob '99, Araluen Centre, Alice Springs

1998, Dreamings, Spazio Pitti Arte, Florence, Italy

1994, Wirrimanu: Aboriginal Art from Balgo, Framed Gallery, Darwin, NT