



Ningura Naparrula

(Indigenous Australian (Pintupi), ca. 1938 - 2013)

Biography

Ningura Naparrula was born around 1938 in Watulka, south of Kiwirrkurra, Northern Territory. Ningura is the widow of the famous Papunya artist Yala Yala Gibbs. In 2002 she was represented at the ARCO Art Fair in Spain and in the same year won the prestigious Alice Prize.

Naparrula began painting in the 90's and together with Naata Nungurrayi is one of the founders of the 'Pintupi Painting Women' movement from Kintore. Her husband, Yala Yala Gibbs Tjungurrayi, became one of the founders of Papunya Tula Artists in the early 1970s and was one of the exponents of the classic Tingari painting style that dominated Pintupi men's painting until the early 1990s. In the 1980s, the family moved back to the newly established Pintupi township of Walungurru (Kintore), then to Muntarti outstation in Western Australia, before returning to Walungurru. Here, Napurrula and Tjungurrayi's other two wives began assisting Tjungurrayi in infilling the backgrounds of his canvases with the meticulous, precisely placed dots that characterised the Tingari style.

Napurrula first painted in her own right in 1995, in the second year of the Haasts Bluff/Kintore women's painting project. Following Tjungurrayi's death in 1998, her painting activity increased dramatically. Her bold, intricate linework and dense monochrome infilling, as seen in *Untitled (Wirrulnga)*, 2000, are reminiscent of Tjungurrayi's earliest works. Wirrulnga is an important women's rockhole site east of Kiwirrkura. Napurrula's work is strongly charged with the seriousness of women's business, echoed in the distinctive paintings of fellow Papunya Tula Artists, Makinti Napanangka and Inyuwa Nampitjinpa. Napurrula and Tjungurrayi's sons, Morris Gibson Tjapaltjarri (Mawitji) and Adam Gibbs Tjapaltjarri, now carry on their mother's and father's work in their own paintings.

Her most impressive work is large in size and often done in two colors (usually black and white or red and white). Her work stands out for its sharply executed patterns in which white dots form up a delicate linear game where the dark background shines through. This gives the illusion that the dark surface forms the upper layer of paint, which gives her paintings a spectacular perspective. She paints with refinement and detail that is exceptional for Aboriginal Art and her finest work shows an unprecedented determination. Niagara is also a member of the Papunya Tula Artist collective. Since motifs from her work were included in the architecture of the in 2006 opened Musée de Quai Branly in Paris, her work is very popular worldwide. Ningura's work is continuously exhibited in numerous renowned galleries across Australia and held a number of successful solo exhibitions.

Selected Collections

Musée du quai Branly, Paris, France
Hank Ebes Collection, Melbourne, Australia
Artbank, Sydney, Australia
Luciano Benetton Collection, Venice, Italy
Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Canberra, Australia
Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia
Griffith University Art Collection, Brisbane, Australia
Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, Australia
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, Australia
The Henderson Family Collection, Sydney, Australia
The Luczo Family Collection, USA
Markus Spazzapan and Suzan Cox Collection, Darwin, Australia
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, Australia
National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, USA
Australian Broadcasting Corporation Collection, Australia
Australian Tourism collection, Adelaide, Australia
Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, Australia
Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, Australia
Pizzi Collection, Melbourne, Australia
Museum de Lyon, Lyon, France
National Museum of Australia, Canberra, Australia
Harold Mitchell Foundation, Australia
Queensland National Art Gallery, South Brisbane, Australia
National Gallery of Victoria, Southbank, Australia
Homes a Court Collection, West Perth, Australia
Kelton Foundation, California, USA
The Palace of Japan, Tokyo, Japan
The Harold Mitchell Foundation and the Australia Council, Australia
Australian Broadcasting Corporation Collection, Australia

Selected Exhibitions

2023

Pintupi Way, The Drill Hall Gallery, funded by the Australian National University, Canberra, Australia
Papunya Tula Women, Harvey Art Projects, Sun Valley, USA

2024

Ladies from Papunya, SmithDavidson Gallery, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

2018

Ancestral Modern: Australian Aboriginal Art from the Kaplan & Levi collection, Blanton Museum of Art, Austin, USA

2017/18

Work by Ningura Napurrula from the collection of Musée de Quai Branly is on view in the Louvre, Abu Dhabi, UAE

2015

Signs and Traces. Contemporary Aboriginal Exhibitions, Zamek Culture Centre, Poznan, Poland

2012

Unique Perspectives, Papunya Tula Artists and the Alice Springs Community, Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs, Australia

2010

Nyakula Kanyini Piintapalyalpayi Kamu Walytja Tjanamapa Lurrtju - Caring for Artists and their Families, Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs, Australia
Walkinkarralakutu - Journeys to Lake Mackay, Cross Cultural Art Exchange, Darwin, Australia
Emerging Elders, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, Australia

2009

Painting the Country, Cross Cultural Art Exchange, Darwin, Australia
Tjukurrpa Palurukutu, Kutjupawana Palyantjanya - Same Stories - A New Way, Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs, Australia
Nganampatju Kanpatja Winjki, Ngnampatju Yara Winkii - All Our Paintings, All Our Stories, Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs, Australia



2008

Ngurra Yurra Kulintjaku - Always Remembering Country, Cross Cultural Art Exchange, Darwin, Australia

The Other Thing - A Survey Show, Charles Darwin University Art Collection, Australia

Marrkangku Yara Palyantjaku Ngurrangka - Making Strong Paintings at Home, Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs, Australia

2007

TogArt Contemporary Art Award, Parliament House, Canberra, Australia

Recent Paintings 2007, Cross Cultural Art Exchange, Darwin, Australia

Wonderful World, Samstag Museum of Art, Adelaide, Australia

The Mollie Gowing Acquisition Fund, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia

2006

Landmarks, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia

Dreaming their Way, National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington D.C., USA

Ningura Napurrula selected for new design on the first floor ceilings of the museum, Musée du quai Branly, Paris, France

2005

Translation, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France

The Desert Mob Art Show, Araluen Art Centre, Alice Springs, Australia

2004

Mythology and Reality, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne, Australia

2003

Australian Contemporary Aboriginal Art, Toskansky Place, Prague, Czech Republic

2001

Aborigena, Palazzo Bricherasio, Turin, Italy

Beyond Wings, Flinders University Art Museum, Flinders, Australia

2000

Papunya Tula - Genesis and Genius, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia

1999

The Desert Mob Art Show, Araluen Art Centre, Alice Springs, Australia

1996

Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs, Australia