

BORDER LINES

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NEW
ART/
30
YEARS

PAPULANKUTJA ARTISTS, TJANPI DESERT WEAVERS & WARAKURNA ARTISTS



It is an honour for Linden New Art to present the artworks selected for this exhibition, and we are extremely grateful to all the artists for sharing their stories. We would like to thank the staff of Papulankutja Artists, Tjanpi Desert Weavers and Warakurna Artists for assisting us in bringing these important and powerful artworks to Melbourne.

In particular we would like to thank Nicole Haverfield, Michelle Young and Nicole Pietsch from Tjanpi Desert Weavers, Jane Menzies from Warakurna Artists and Tim Pearn, Eva Straulimo and Mel Henderson from Papulankutja Artists.

We would also like to thank Edwina Bolger and David Hagger who, as past Curators for Linden New Art, helped to initiate and develop this exhibition.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Last but not least, we would like to thank Chapman & Bailey for their generous in-kind contribution.

We would like to give particular acknowledgment to the artist Belle Karirrka Davidson (name permitted for use), who passed away on the 22nd of July 2017. We would like to extend our sincere condolences to the artist's family and community.



Dianne Golding, *Toyota and wati (man)*, 2017, tjanpi (wild harvested grass), raffia, wool, wipya (emu) feathers, 46 x 44 x 112 cm
Image courtesy of the artist and Tjanpi Desert Weavers

This exhibition brings together artworks from Papulankutja Artists, Tjanpi Desert Weavers and Warakurna Artists. The artists represented live and work within the Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (NPY) Lands, which cover approximately 350,000 square kilometres across the tri-state (WA, SA, NT) border region of central Australia.

The colonial state and territory borders are not recognised by the Aboriginal people of this region. They are invisible in the landscape, and notions of identity and belonging are determined by ancient connections to land, knowledge and family. The title of this exhibition therefore refers to the lines of interconnection that exist between the communities, artists and arts centres of the NPY Lands.

INTRODUCTION

These artworks represent the lived experiences, the shared histories and the landscape of this vast and remote area. Above all, these works demonstrate the artists' connection to their lands and how their ability to maintain this connection has prevailed despite repeated colonial

incursions and challenging circumstances. The works represent resilience, both personal and cultural, as well as a drive to be valued, recognised and self-sufficient. Tjanpi Desert Weavers, Papulankutja Artists and Warakurna Artists provide vital support for the artists to achieve these aims.

Many of the artists in *Border Lines* have worked across all three of these arts organisations. The Tjanpi Desert Weavers, for example, work with artists from 26 remote communities within the NPY Lands, including Papulankutja and Warakurna, which are both located on Ngaanyatjarra Lands. The artwork that comes from this region is forged through cycles of innovation and exchange, as artists move and work in different places.

The variety of forms, techniques and materials included in this exhibition reflects the diversity of art practice that exists in the central desert region, as well as the constant evolution that also characterises the art of the area. Traditional practices, such as *purnu* (wood carving) and *tjanpi* (grass weaving) have informed the more recent work, which is produced with non-traditional materials, such as acrylic on canvas, wool or raffia. Many artists at Warakurna and Papulankutja continue to explore the formal relationships between carvings, woven sculptures and painting by making working across all three media.

The practice of weaving natural fibres is traditionally used to make ceremonial items and other daily necessities such as sandals or pouches. The sculptures made today by the Tjanpi Desert Weavers demonstrate a highly developed form of these weaving techniques, with a joyful and humorous approach to the process of making. The works are inspired by traditional desert life as well as modern day influences. This is reflected in the works selected for this exhibition, which include baskets, sculptures of important totemic animals or those long-prized for food, alongside a utility truck and a helicopter.



[L-R] Judith Yinyika Chambers, *Cutting of the Road*, 2017, Dianne Golding, *Toyota and wati (man)*, 2017 and Tjukapati James, *Helicopter*, 2017
Photograph: David Marks Photographer

One of the most important things about creating the sculptures is that it provides an opportunity for NPY women to travel out into their traditional lands to collect the *tjanpi* (grasses), feathers and seeds they require to make the work. These long trips involve camping out, hunting, telling stories and teaching the younger women and girls about the land and *tjukurpa*.¹

*"When we ladies sit down to make our tjampi work its like one big family sitting together ... These animals are from our family's country and our family's stories. The animals, the country, the stories, the families are all together like one."*²

Nora Davidson's bold and vibrant paintings are also intimately bound to the landscape. They are about the artist's birthplace, a large rock-hole called Multju, in an area known as Mulga country that lies north-east of Papulankutja. The works document journeys that the artist has taken through this area, and include details of the landscape such as lakes, sand-hills and rock-holes.

In stark contrast, Belle Karirrka Davidson's³ works depict the nuclear bomb tests that took place at Maralinga. Between 1952 and 1963 the British Government, with the support of the Australian Government, carried out a series of nuclear tests at three sites in Australia: the Monte Bello Islands off the Western Australian coast, and Emu Field and Maralinga in the remote south west of South Australia. In each case the Aboriginal custodians of the land were not consulted and were not protected from the immediate and long-term effects of the tests. Davidson's works show the toxic dust clouds that were blown from Maralinga into WA, causing widespread, often fatal, illness and poisoning the land.



Multju rockhole. Photograph: Tim Pearn.



Belle Karirrka Davidson (name permitted for use), *Maralinga*, 2017, acrylic on canvas, 84 x 100 cm
Image courtesy of the artist and Papulankutja Artists

*"Everyone was camped at Wilkkuryl Rockhole on holiday 40km from Warburton and when we were asleep that cloud come over us in the night. Nultajtarra (sorry) - one lady was walking around with a baby on her back and she didn't know it was dead. Three children of my sister survived but my sister died. There was a funny smell - people were vomiting and had diarrhea. Lots of old people and babies died - some surveyors took us back to Warburton - my son was alright."*⁴

The artworks from Warakurna document the contributions of the artists and their families to the cutting of the roads through their lands in the 1970s, particularly the roads from Warburton to Warakurna and Jameson to Warakurna.

*"We camped along the way in swags. Even the kids came along. We had a green tractor. Sometimes we got a flat tyre and had to fix it. Everyone had to help clear the road. We had axes and had to cut down trees. It was a really big job and hard work."*⁵

This work was undertaken as part of a Community Development Employment Program. The communities were not paid for this work, though they received food and other necessities whilst working. The roads enabled quicker and easier access to Country, sacred sites and family.⁶

Across the Ngaanyatjarra Lands, artists have increasingly used a figurative style to depict events that have occurred since colonisation. Such paintings are often deeply personal, and show things that have happened directly to the artist or their immediate family. Their clear and direct delivery is testament to the fact that they have been made with the express intention of sharing the story with a wider audience.

By bringing these works together, *Border Lines* allows a unique and precious insight into the lives and histories of the communities living in one of the most remotely inhabited places in the world. These works are highly significant in terms of being at the forefront of the longest continuum of cultural practice of any civilisation in human history.

Juliette Hanson
Curator, Linden New Art

¹ Tjukurpa is a Pitjantjatjara word for ancestral story or law.

² Judith Chambers, *Tjanpi Desert Weavers*, Watson, P (Ed.). Macmillan Publishers Australia, 2012, p.273

³ Belle Karirrka Davidson passed away on the 22nd of July 2017. We have been granted permission from the artist's family to use her name here and in the exhibition.

⁴ Artist statement from an interview with Papulankutja Artists Manager Tim Pearn & Linden New Art Curator Juliette Hanson, 10.6.17

⁵ Judith Chambers, quote provided by Warakurna Artists, 2017

⁶ Information provided by Warakurna Artists, 2017



Eunice Yunurupa Porter and Rocky William Porter, *Walu Cut Line*, 2017, acrylic on canvas, 76.2 x 101.6 cm
Photograph: David Marks Photographer





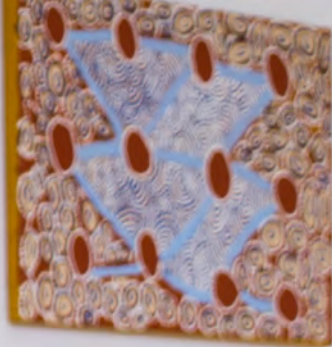
Border Lines, 2017, installation view
Photograph: David Marks Photographer



Border Lines, 2017, installation view
Photograph: David Marks Photographer



Dallas Smythe, *Papa (A kangaroo chasing Dog)*, 2017
Photograph: David Marks Photographer





Border Lines, 2017, installation view
Photograph: David Marks Photographer



Border Lines, 2017, installation view
Photograph: David Marks Photographer



Border Lines, 2017, installation view
Photograph: David Marks Photographer



Aboriginal Art
The artwork is a square painting on a black background. It features a central blue circle with radiating orange and blue lines. The lines are decorated with white and orange dots. The background is black.



Aboriginal Art
The artwork is a rectangular painting on a black background. It features a central blue circle with radiating orange and blue lines. The lines are decorated with white and orange dots. The background is black.





Border Lines, 2017, installation view
Photograph: David Marks Photographer



ARTIST'S STATEMENT
The work is a response to the question of what it means to be human. It explores the relationship between the body and the mind, and the way in which we experience the world. The painting is a journey into the unknown, a search for meaning in a complex and often chaotic world.

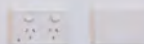


ARTIST'S STATEMENT
This work is a celebration of the human spirit and the power of the imagination. It is a journey into the unknown, a search for meaning in a complex and often chaotic world. The painting is a journey into the unknown, a search for meaning in a complex and often chaotic world.





Border Lines, 2017, installation view
Photograph: David Marks Photographer



Border Lines, 2017, installation view
Photograph: David Marks Photographer





Border Lines, 2017, installation view
Photograph: David Marks Photographer





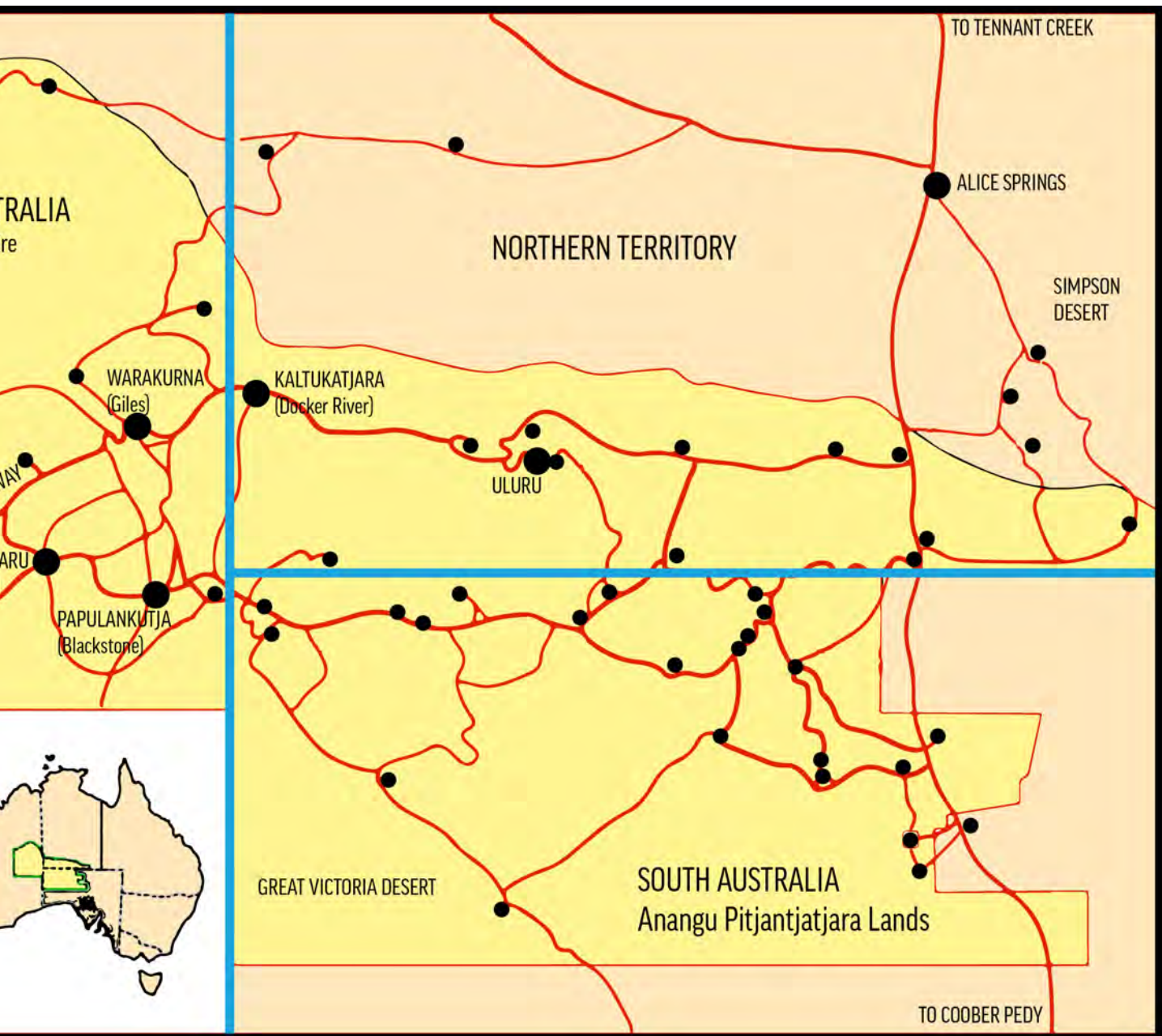
Border Lines, 2017, installation view
Photograph: David Marks Photographer

PAPULANKUTJA ARTISTS

TJANPI DESERT WEAVERS

WARAKURNA ARTISTS





SOURCE > NPY Women's Council website <<https://www.npywc.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/NPYWC-map.jpg>>.

Papulankutja, more commonly known as Blackstone community, is located north of the Blackstone Range, half-way between Mantamaru and Irrunytju communities near the WA/SA/NT tri-state border. Its residents have family ties to both Ngaanyatjarra and Pitjantjatjara language groups. Most of the Pitjantjatjara residents grew up at Ernabella Mission and the Ngaanyatjarra residents at Warburton Mission. The community of Papulankutja was established after Ngaanyatjarra people walked out of Warburton Mission in the 1970s and returned to their land. At the northern extent of the Great Victoria Desert, the area around Blackstone contains many significant sacred sites of cultural importance, which artists draw upon for the creation of their artworks.

Papulankutja Artists was established in 2001. After many years of working through Blackstone's Women's Centre and then the community hall, Papulankutja Artists opened their own Art Studio in 2009. Today, the art centre supports women and men, young people and old, working together creating artworks that celebrate an unbroken connection to country and the rich cultural continuity of this vibrant landscape.

All text and images courtesy of Papulankutja Artists.

IMAGE
WITHHELD

BELLE KARIRRKA DAVIDSON (name permitted for use)

Belle Karirrka Davidson (name permitted for use), a Pitjantjatjara woman, was born around 1942 near Papulankutja (Blackstone) and passed away 22nd July 2017. Davidson was raised at the Warburton Mission after her mother died. When she was sixteen, she went to live with family at Patinintjara, the first community established at Papulankutja. Davidson was a founding member of Irrunytju Arts and Chair of Ngaanyatjarra Media. She was an excellent story-teller and knew the complex layers of many of the tjukurpa that traverse and intersect in the region.



NORA NGINANA DAVIDSON

Nora Nginana Davidson was born in 1955 near the community of Jameson where her family holds the story for Illurpa. Nora now lives at Blackstone with her family. Nora has taken the ideas of her country and the stories she was told as a young girl and depicted them elegantly with a depth of knowledge, subtle yet sacred and vital to her ancestors way of life.

Tjanpi (meaning wild harvested grass) began in 1995 as a series of basket-making workshops facilitated by the NPY Women's Council in the Ngaanyatjarra Lands of WA. Women wanted meaningful and culturally appropriate employment on their homelands to better provide for their families. Building upon a long history of using natural fibres to make objects for ceremonial and daily use, women took quickly to coiled basketry and were soon sharing their new-found skills with relatives and friends on neighbouring communities. It was not long before they began experimenting with producing sculptural forms. Today there are over 400 women across three states making spectacular contemporary fibre art from locally collected grasses and working with fibre in this way has become a fundamental part of Central and Western Desert culture.

At its core, Tjanpi embodies the energies and rhythms of Country, culture and community. Women regularly come together to collect grass for their fibre art, taking the time to hunt, gather food, visit significant sites, perform inma (cultural song and dance) and teach their children about Country whilst creating an ever-evolving array of fibre artworks. The shared stories, skills and experiences of this wide-reaching network of mothers, daughters, aunties, sisters and grandmothers form the bloodline of the desert weaving phenomenon and have fuelled Tjanpi's rich history of collaborative practice.

TJANPI DESERT WEAVERS

All text and images courtesy of Tjanpi Desert Weavers.





ROMA NYUTJANGKA BUTLER

Roma Nyutjangka Butler from Irrunytju is a weaver belonging to the Pitjantjatjara language and cultural group. She was born in 1959 at Wilo rockhole, on the kanyala (euro kangaroo) tjukurpa track. Roma spent her early years at Ernabella mission in South Australia and then travelled by camel to Warburton in Western Australia, where she went to school and learnt to read and write. Irrunytju is her grandfather's brother's country. Roma also works at Minyma Kutjara Arts and with Ngaanyatjarra Media presenting a radio program of local music and news.



JUDITH YINYIKA CHAMBERS

Judith Yinyika Chambers was born in 1958 at Mitjika, a rock-hole near what is now Wanarn community. Judith's mother was well-known Tjanpi artist and painter Carol Maatja Golding and her father was Billy Golding. Her family settled at Warburton mission while she attended school. Chambers completed her schooling at Pink Lake High School in Esperance, on the south coast of Western Australia. After living at Docker River in the Northern Territory in the late 1960s her family returned to Warakurna as part of the 1970s movement back to country.



DIANNE UNGUKALPI GOLDING

Dianne Ungukalpi Golding was born in 1966 at Katartirn, near Warburton, and attended school in Warburton and Kalgoorlie. As a young woman she moved to Docker River, Northern Territory, then to Warakurna, as part of the homelands movement. Golding is an accomplished weaver of baskets and sculptures. She paints Karlaya Tjukurrpa (Emu Dreaming), Kungkarrangkalpa (Seven Sisters Dreaming) and Tjukurrpa Patirlpa Wati (Parrot Men Dreaming), and represents figures from these Dreamings in her tjanpi. Dianna is also an accomplished painter, represented by Warakurna Artists.



NANCY JACKSON

Nancy Jackson is a senior Tjanpi artist and prolific maker of Tjanpi baskets. Nancy was born on country near the WA and NT borders and now lives in the Warakurna community. She is a skilled bush woman and a well-respected artist amongst her peers. She has been making baskets since 1995 and has developed a distinctive style with flat-bottomed rounded baskets and spacious stitching. In this series of baskets Nancy has also incorporated wipya (emu) feather trimmings to accompany her distinctive style.



TJUKAPATI JAMES

Tjukapati James was born in Docker River (Kaltukatjara). She grew up in the bush, walking from water hole to water hole. She hunted rabbits, kangaroos, emus and other kuka (meat), and collected bush tucker. As her parents are both from Docker River, Tjukapati has strong connections to her country and has important responsibilities as a senior custodian. As a young woman she worked at the Ernabella mission before moving to Areyonga to marry a stockman. She had five children and now has many grandchildren. Tjukapati now lives with her family in Docker River and is busy with many Tjukurrpa (Dreaming) commitments.



NININGKA LEWIS

Niningka Lewis was born in 1945 near Areyonga (NT). She grew up in Pukatja (Ernabella, SA), where she attended school and later worked in the Ernabella craft room, learning to spin wool, weave floor rugs and make batik. Since Tjanpi's inception in 1995, Niningka has been a pioneering weaver and sculptor. She was one of the first to use raffia, the first to create patterns into her work using coloured raffia and the first to attach carved animals to her baskets. Niningka's sculptural fibre art is informed by her expertise in punu (wood carving) and she makes wonderfully animated animals, objects and cameos from community life.



DALLAS SMYTHE

Dallas Smythe was born at Wiluna, grew up in Warburton and now lives in Warakurna. Dallas is married with one son. Although Dallas has only been making Tjanpi baskets and sculptures for a short time, she is rapidly gaining a strong reputation as an exciting and innovative Tjanpi artist. Dallas's grandmother Nora Holland is a well-known painter and Tjanpi weaver, and has been a strong teacher and support for her. Dallas likes to experiment with new materials and styles and she gets her inspiration from family and community life.



TJUNKAYA TAPAYA

Tjunkaya grew up at the Ernabella Mission, where she went to school and later worked and taught her peers various domestic skills including sewing and cooking. Tjunkaya also worked in the craft room, becoming an outstanding batik artist. Tjunkaya's tjanpi work is consistently innovative and skillfully executed. She clearly has great knowledge of the habits and nuances of desert animals.

Warakurna Artists is a 100% Artist owned Aboriginal corporation situated in Warakurna Community, on the Great Central Road in the Ngaanyatjarra Lands of Western Australia.

Warakurna Artists is a place where men and women, young and old, paint and share Tjukurrpa (Dreaming stories) and contemporary tales in an energetic, creative and happy environment. Warakurna Artists works with broad range of artists in the communities of Warakurna, Patjarr (Kayili Artists) and Wanarn, through the painting therapy program run weekly out of Wanarn Aged Care.

Paintings are vibrant and diverse, reflecting each artist's unique style, stories and connection to country. Passing on these important stories to young people is a critical means of keeping culture strong and vital.

WARAKURNA ARTISTS

All text and images courtesy of Warakurna Artists





POLLY PAWUYA BUTLER-JACKSON

Polly Pawuya Butler-Jackson was born in 1957 at a soak called Yulpigari, close to Partupirri (Bunglebiddy) rock-hole. As a child she travelled on foot with her family in country to the northwest of Warakurna. She went to school at Warburton Mission and then to Pink Lake High School in Esperance, on the south coast of Western Australia. Butler-Jackson has been painting with Warakurna Artists since 2006.



JUDITH YINYIKA CHAMBERS

Judith Yinyika Chambers was born in 1958 at Mitjika, a rock-hole near what is now Wanarn community. Judith's mother was well-known Tjanpi artist and painter Carol Maatja Golding and her father was Billy Golding. Her family settled at Warburton mission while she attended school. Chambers completed her schooling at Pink Lake High School in Esperance, on the south coast of Western Australia. After living at Docker River in the Northern Territory in the late 1960s her family returned to Warakurna as part of the 1970s movement back to country.



EUNICE YUNURUPA PORTER

Eunice Yunurupa Porter was born in 1948 at Wirrkural on the Jameson road out of Warburton mission, and lived with her family in the bush before attending school at the Warburton mission from about the age of 10. In 1974 Porter moved to Warakurna, the country of her late husband, where she still lives with her children and grandchildren. Porter is a respected leader and artist in the Warakurna community. She was elected to Warakurna Artists Executive at its inception and has been the chairperson since 2006.



ROCKY PORTER

Rocky Porter was born in 1973 near Warburton, and moved with his mother to Warakurna in 1974. He has only recently started painting. He has been a DJ for CAAMA (Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association) Radio and is involved in organising concerts in Warakurna.

TJANPI DESERT WEAVERS

ROMA BUTLER

Kalaya iti (Little emu), 2017

tjanpi (wild harvested grass), raffia, wool and wipya (emu) feathers

40 x 20 x 50 cm

LIST OF WORKS

Ninu (Bilby), 2017

tjanpi (wild harvested grass), raffia, wool and wipya (emu) feathers

30 x 20 x 75 cm

Waru (Wallaby), 2017

tjanpi (wild harvested grass), raffia and wool

50 x 20 x 40 cm

JUDITH INYIKA CHAMBERS

Wati nyinanyi (man sitting down), 2017

tjanpi (wild harvested grass), raffia and wool

70 x 50 x 75 cm

Tji tji (Child), 2017

tjanpi (wild harvested grass), raffia and wool

60 x 45 x 60 cm

DIANNE GOLDING

Toyota and wati (man), 2017

tjanpi (wild harvested grass), raffia, wool, wipya (emu) feathers

46 x 44 x 112 cm

NANCY JACKSON

Tall round basket, natural/orange/pink/red, with emu feathers, 2017

tjanpi (wild harvested grass), raffia and wipya (emu) feathers

13 x 34 cm

Tall round basket, natural/pink/yellow, emu feather base, 2017

tjanpi (wild harvested grass), raffia and wool

70 x 50 x 75 cm

Round basket, yellow/pink/blue/natural/green with emu feathers, 2017

tjanpi (wild harvested grass), raffia and wool

8 x 31 cm

Round basket, natural/pink/orange/yellow with emu feathers, orange stitching, 2017

tjanpi (wild harvested grass), raffia and wool

10 x 36 cm

TJUKAPATI JAMES

Helicopter, 2017

tjanpi (wild harvested grass), raffia, wool and recycled CD

56 x 34 x 100 cm

NININGKA LEWIS

Marlu (Standing up) 2017

tjanpi (wild harvested grass), raffia, wool
53 x 25 x 45 cm

DALLAS SMYTHE

Papa (A kangaroo chasing Dog), 2017

tjanpi (wild harvested grass), raffia, wool
63 x 44 x 107 cm

Kalaya (Emu), 2013

tjanpi (wild harvested grass), raffia, emu feathers and ininti
seed
46 x 36 x 88 cm

Basket; large with emu feathers, 2016

tjanpi (wild harvested grass), raffia and wipya (emu) feathers
14 x 64 cm

***Round basket, natural/pink/red/orange emu feather base,
2017***

tjanpi (wild harvested grass), raffia and wipya (emu) feathers
10 x 38 cm

TJUNKAYA TAPAYA

Ngintaka (Perente - young one), 2017

tjanpi (wild harvested grass), raffia
45 x 17 x 58 cm

Ngintaka (Large perente), 2017

tjanpi (wild harvested grass), raffia and wool
24 x 39 x 122 cm

Ngintaka (Perente) eating emu leg, 2017

tjanpi (wild harvested grass), raffia and wool
40 x 20 x 116 cm

Ngintaka (Perente) with pussycat (lunch), 2017

tjanpi (wild harvested grass), raffia and wool
38 x 52 x 114 cm

PAPULANKUTJA ARTISTS

BELLE KARIRRKA DAVIDSON (name permitted for use)

The road between Leanora and Wiluna, 2016

acrylic on canvas
75 x 152 cm

Maralinga Bomb, 2016

acrylic on canvas
103 x 123 cm

Maralinga, 2016

acrylic on canvas
60 x 80 cm

Maralinga, 2017

acrylic on canvas
84 x 100 cm

NORA DAVIDSON

Multju, 2016

acrylic on canvas

101 x 61 cm

Lilyil Rockhole, 2016

acrylic on canvas

101 x 75 cm

Travelling through country around Multju, 2016

acrylic on canvas

61 x 101 cm

Multju, 2015

acrylic on canvas

76 x 76 cm

Lake near Multju, 2014

acrylic on canvas

101 x 61 cm

WARAKURNA ARTISTS

EUNICE YUNURUPA PORTER

Cutting the road to Walu, 2017

acrylic on canvas

101.6 x 152.4 cm

Man Running, 2017

acrylic on plywood

60 x 89.7 cm

EUNICE YUNURUPA PORTER AND ROCKY WILLIAM PORTER

Walu Cut Line, 2017

acrylic on canvas

76.2 x 101.6 cm

JUDITH YINYIKA CHAMBERS

Cutting of the Road, 2017

acrylic and tin on plywood

60 x 89.7 cm

Tractor, 2017

acrylic on tin

dimensions variable

POLLY PAWUYA BUTLER-JACKSON

Cutting the Road, 2017

acrylic on plywood

60 x 89.7 cm

Green Tractor, 2017

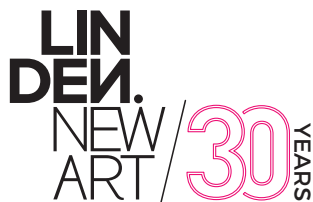
acrylic on tin

dimensions variable



Downtown Blackstone Photograph: Tim Pearn

DIRECTOR: MELINDA MARTIN
CURATOR: JULIETTE HANSON
DEVELOPMENT MANAGER: LYN JOHNSON
COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING COORDINATOR: TOM PENDER
GALLERY ADMINISTRATORS: JASMIN McNEILL, SIYING ZHOU



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