



Short St. Gallery



Tjunkaya Tapaya

Birth Year	1947
Language Group	Pitjantjatjara
Region	APY Lands

Tjunkaya grew up at the Ernabella Mission. In mission days, the building which is now the art centre was originally used as a food hall by the missionaries. In 1948 it became the Craft Room, where the first work was by women, spinning wool and rug making. Most of the senior artists painting on the APY Lands today have passed through this building across more than one of its incarnations.

Tjunkaya began work in the Craft Room making weavings, later excelling in the medium of batik, and became one of the outstanding artists with work in several public collections. Her work was featured on the cover of Judith Ryan's 'Across the Desert: Aboriginal Batik from Central Australia.'

Tjunkaya also works in ceramics, tjanpi, punu, print making, spinning and mukata making and her work in these mediums has been seen in numerous exhibitions, in public and private galleries, across Australia and internationally since 1971. Her works are held in many national and international collections, including the National Museum of Scotland, National Museum of Australia, National Gallery of Australia and the Museum of Ethnology, Osaka.

Since 2015, Tjunkaya has chosen to concentrate on painting and tjanpi sculpture. This focus has seen her become one of the most in demand female artists on the APY Lands and increasingly recognised in these two mediums. In 2010 and 2011 she was collected by Artbank, and in 2011 and 2012 selected as a finalist in the Togart Contemporary Art Award. In 2012 her tjulpu (bird) tjanpi sculptures were selected for exhibition in the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards (NATSIA, the Telstras). Her first solo show was in 2012 at



Short St. Gallery

Alcaston Gallery in Melbourne, where Tjunkaya exhibited a mix of paintings and tjanpi sculpture.

Tjunkaya was the leader of the Nintintjaku Project, an inter-generational teaching project working with Ernabella Anangu School and the Ernabella NPY youth team. She has also recently recommenced work in the ceramic's studio, exhibiting ceramics again for the first time in a number of years.

Tjunkaya is also a prolific writer in Pitjantjatjara. She is currently developing a bi-lingual children's book. She has essays published in a number of exhibition catalogues, including the Desert Mob 2017 catalogue and the catalogue for the 2017 Tarnanthi: Festival of Contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art.

In 2016 Tjunkaya took part in a collaborative project, a tjanpi (woven) sculpture called Minyma Tjirilyanya Ngaltujara Pikatjara (Echidna Woman Hurt and Sick). This tells an ancient story of the Echidna Woman. This work was listed as a finalist in the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Award.

In 2018 Tjunkaya's life's work as a representative for her people, an artist and a writer was recognised and she received the Gladys Elphick Award for Lifetime Achievement.

In 2020 Tjunkaya was awarded an Order of Australia, General Division in the Queen's Birthday Honour.

Solo Exhibitions

- 2021 Kungkarangkalpa: Seven Sisters – Sabbia Gallery, Sydney, NSW
2012 Nintinjaku – Teaching, Showing, Passing On, Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne, VIC

Group Exhibitions

- 2024 Aboriginal Signature, Bruxelles, Belgium – Tribute to Our Elders
2023 Sabbia Gallery, Sydney, NSW – Nganampa Tjukurpa Nganampa Ara: Our Story Our Way
2023 JamFactory Craft and Design Centre, Adelaide, SA – Ernabella Arts: Ceramic Warka Wiru 20 Years-kutu – 20 Years of Creating Ceramics
2023 Everywhen Artspace, Mornington Peninsular, VIC – Piryakatu - Springtime
2023 Araluen Art Centre, Alice Springs, NT – Desert Mob
2023 Sturt Gallery, Mittagong, NSW – Terra Nova – 70 Years of Sturt Pottery
2023 Michael Reid, Berlin, Germany – Kungkarangkalpa: Seven Sisters
2023 IDAIA, Paris, France – Le Chant Aborigene des Sept Soeurs – The Seven Sisters Story



Short St. Gallery

- 2023 Aboriginal Signature, Bruxelles, Belgium – Caress the Earth II: Manta Ngura Atuntju Kanyini II
- 2022 Araluen Art Centre, Alice Springs, NT – Desert Mob 2022
- 2022 Yaama Ganu Gallery, Moree, NSW – Mina-ka Malangka: After the Rain
- 2022 Araluen Art Centre, Alice Springs, NT – Clay on Country, Australian Ceramics Triennale
- 2022 Aboriginal Signature, Bruxelles, Belgium – Profundity – Art from the APY Lands
- 2022 Short Street Gallery, Broome, WA – Manta Tjula – Soft Earth
- 2021 Aboriginal Signature, Bruxelles, Belgium - Caress the Earth: Manta Ngura Atuntju Kanyini
- 2021 Everywhen Artspace, Mornington Peninsular, VIC - Three Ladies from Ernabella: Minyma Mankurpa Ernabella la Nguru
- 2021 Sabbia Gallery, Sydney, NSW - PREVIEW - Sydney Contemporary
- 2021 Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs, NT - Desert Mob 30
- 2021 Artitja Fine Art Gallery, South Fremantle, WA - Ananyi Nyurakutu- Going Home
- 2020 McCulloch and McCulloch, Everywhen Artspace, VIC - Always Was, Always Will be
- 2020 Metro Arts, Queensland - Pattern and Place
- 2020 Artitja Fine Art, South Fremantle - Cultural Connections: the gift of story
- 2020 Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, SA - Tamarthi Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art: Open Hands
- 2020 Artitja Fine Art, York, WA - Spring Salon Art
- 2020 Short Street Gallery, Broome, WA - Nganampa Tjukurpa Ananyi Wilurara (Our Stories Going West)
- 2020 Aboriginal Contemporary, Sydney, NSW - Nganampa Tjukurpa Ananyi Kakarara (Our Stories Going East)
- 2020 Talapi Gallery, Alice Springs, NT - Flying Colours
- 2019 JamFactory Craft and Design Centre, Adelaide, VIC - Wanapari - in a line, following one another
- 2019 Everywhen Space, McCulloch and McCulloch, VIC - ReGeneration: Showing, teaching, passing down
- 2019 Araluen Art Centre, Alice Springs, NT - Desert Mob 2019
- 2019 Talapi Gallery, Alice Springs, NT - Desert Colour featuring Ernabella ceramics
- 2018 ARTKELCH, Freiburg, Germany - Offen für Kunst
- 2018 Araluen Art Centre - Desert Mob 2018
- 2018 Artitja Fine Art, South Fremantle - Knowing Country
- 2017 In These Hands: Mara Nyanganka, Sturt Gallery, Mittagong NSW
- 2017 Desert Mob 2017, Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs NT
- 2017 Our Country in Clay, Nomad Art, Darwin NT
- 2017 Ngura Kutjupa, Walytia Kutju: Different Communities, One Family, Tangentyere Artists, Alice Springs, NT, 2017
- 2017 Relative Colours, Aboriginal Contemporary, Sydney, NSW



Short St. Gallery

- 2016 Jganampa Kilipil: Our Stars, Hazelhurst Regional Gallery & Arts Centre,
2016 Inheritance, Salt Contemporary, Queenscliff, VIC
2016 Point Of Difference - Desert To The Sea , Artitja Fine Art, Fremantle, WA
2016 All About Colour, Summer Show + Art Parade, Mcculloch & Mcculloch/Salt
Contemporary Art
2016 Tjukurpa Kunpa/Strong Culture Holiday Show 2015-2016 , Harvey Art
Projects, Usa
2015 Desert Colour, Talapai Gallery, Alice Springs NT
2015 Kuruntu Mukuringkula Kulira Palyantja (Stories Straight From The Heart), Short
Street Gallery, Broome
2015 Bold And The Beautiful, Talapi, Alice Springs
2014 Masters; Interpretation Of Land, Mcculloch & Mcculloch/Salt, Contemporary
Art, Queenscliff, VIC
2014 Desert Mob, Araluen Arts Centre
2014 Spring Salon + Art Parade, Mcculloch & Mcculloch - Shoreham Victoria,
2014 Pilanypa, Harvey Art Projects, Idaho USA
2014 Autumn Salon + Art Parade, Mcculloch & Mcculloch - Shoreham Victoria
2014 Bold And The Beautiful, Talapi, Alice Springs
2014 Eastern Apy Lands: Artkelch, Touring Freiburg, Munich, Hamburg And
Bodensee, Germany
2014 The Summer Collectors Show, Mcculloch & Mcculloch – Shoreham Victoria
2013 Tjukurpa Nganampa Kunpa Kanyintjaku: Keeping Our Stories Strong Harvey Art
Projects, Idaho USA
2013 A Salon Show For Indigenous Literacy, Mcculloch & Mcculloch - Dmcpr Media,
Leichhardt, NSW
2013 Heartland, Contemporary Art From South Australia, Art Gallery Of South
Australia, Adelaide SA
2013 Regeneration: Established & Emerging Talents Of Indigenous Art, Mcculloch &
Mcculloch, Shoreham, VIC
2013 Nyingga: The Cold Tome Of The Year, Harvey Arts Projects, Idaho USA
2013 Desert Mob, Araluen Art Centre, Alice Springs NT
2013 String Theory: Focus On Contemporary Australian Art, Museum Of
Contemporary Art, Sydney NSW
2013 Australian Vision, Naidoc 2013, Australian High Commission, Singapore
2012 Tjamuku Kamiku Tjukurpa, Outstation Gallery, Darwin NT
2012 Tjukurpa Mulapa (True Storeis), Redot Fine Art Gallery, Singapore
2012 Deadl: In-Between Heaven And Hell, Tandanya, Adelaide SA
2012 Indigenous Ceramic Art Award, Shepparton Art Museum, Shepparton VIC
2012 Desert Mob, Araluen Arts Centre
2012 Kapi Ukalinganyi, Aboriginal And Pacific Art Gallery, Sydney NSW
2012 Ngayuku Ngura, Ngayuku Tjukurpa, Sa Museum, Adelaide, SA
2012 Natsiaas, Museum And Art Gallery Of The Northern Territory, Darwin NT



Short St. Gallery

2012	Togart Contemporary Art Award, Chan Contemporary Art Space, Darwin NT
2011	Desert Mob, Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs NT
2011	Togart Contemporary Art Award, Chan Contemporary Arts Space, Darwin NT
2011	We Know Our Land, We Keep Our Land, Raft Artspace, Alice Springs NT
2011	The Kings School Art Prize
2011	The Kings School, Parramatta, NSW
2011	Emabella Arts Kuwari, Chapman Gallery, Canberra ACT
2011	Emabella Undiscovered, Turnbridge Gallery, Margaret Rover, WA
2011	Our Mob 2010 On Tour, National Travelling Exhibition
2011	Tjukurpa Nyangatja Ngananala Unngu Ngaranyi, Aboriginal And Pacific Art, Sydney NSW
2011	Ngura Kutju, Tjukurpa Pulkatjara, Short St Gallery, Broome WA
2010	Ngura Nganampa (Our Country), Outstation Gallery, Darwin NT
2010	Our Mob, Adelaide Festival Centre, Adelaide SA
2010	Recent Paintings: Emabella Arts, Chapman Gallery, Canberra Act
2010	Kayili And Emabella 2010, Aboriginal And Pacific Art, Sydney NSW
2010	Ara Irititja Munu Ara Kuwaritja Emabella-La, Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne VIC
2010	Ngura Nganampa (Our Country), Jamfactory, Adelaide SA
2010	Desert Mob, Araluen Centre, Alice Springs NT
2010	Womens Exhibition, Randell Lane Fine Art, Perth WA
2009	Emabella Ceramics, Birrung Gallery, Sydney, Nsw (Ceramics Triennial)
2008	Across The Desert: Aboriginal Batik From Cetral Australia, National Gallery Of Victoria, Melbourne. VIC
2008	Desert Mob, Araluen Centre, Alice Springs, NT
2008	Nganampa Warka Wiru (Our Work Is Beautiful), Cudgegong Gallery, Gulgong, NSW
2008	Anangu Backyard, Adelaide Festival Centre, Adelaide SA
2008	Kiti Art: New Batik From Emabella, Fabric Of Life, Adelaide Fringe Festival, Adelaide, SA
2007	A Way Of Seeing, Gallery Gondwana, Sydney, NSW
2007	Australian Contemporary-New Works From Emabella, Hermannsburg And Tiwi Islands, Sofa, Chicago, USA
2007	Emabella - A Collection Of New Works, Australia Dreaming Art, Melbourne, VIC
2007	Desert Mob, Araluen Cultural Centre, Alice Springs, NT
2007	Desert Diversity, Flinders Lane Gallery, Adelaide, SA
2007	Visions Of Country, Seymour College, Adelaide, SA
2007	Divas Of The Desert, Gallery Gondwana, Alice Springs NT
2006	Homeland Heartland, Jam Factory Contemporary Craft & Design, Adelaide, SA
2006	Let The Earth Speak, Fabric Of Life, Adelaide Fringe Festival, Adelaide, SA
1998	Warka Irititja Munu Kuwari Kutu (Work From The Past And Present), Tandanya, Adelaide, SA



Short St. Gallery

- 1997 Walka Ernabella / Ernabella Design, Multitjulu Cultural Centre, Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park, NT
- 1997 Pumululu, Raintree Aboriginal Fine Art Gallery, Darwin, NT
- 1996 Painting The Land, National Museum Of Australia, Canberra, ACT (Then Touring Until 1999)
- 1994 Peter Ballas Gallery, Brisbane, QLD
- 1994 Ernabellaku :Tjukurpa Wiru, Nganampa Tjukurpa, Museum Nasional, Jakarta, Indonesia
- 1993 Lizards, Snakes & Cattle Dogs - Australian Contemporary Textiles German Textile Museum, Krefeld, Germany
- 1993 The Children's Gift, Tandanya, Adelaide, SA
- 1989 Araluen Art Centre for Culture and Entertainment, Alice Springs, NT
- 1988 Wirutjuta, Karnta, Throughout South East Asia
- 1988 Texas International Festival, Texas, USA
- 1986 Textiles of The Commonwealth (Touring Exhibition) UK
- 1976 Grace Bros. Chatswood, Sydney NSW Also 1977 & 1982, 1976
- 1971 Argyle Arts Centre, Sydney, NSW

Collections

ARALUEN ARTS CENTRE
ART GALLERY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA, ADELAIDE, SA
ART GALLERY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA, COLLABORATIVE TJANPI WORK, 2012
ARTBANK, 2010, 2011
AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER STUDIES (AIATSIS), CANBERRA ACT
CHARLES DARWIN UNIVERSITY ART COLLECTION, DARWIN, NT 2021
GEELONG ART GALLERY, NSW, 2022
JANET HOLMES À COURT COLLECTION
LEEUWIN ESTATE, 2012
MUSEUM OF ETHNOLOGY, OSAKA, JAPAN
NATIONAL GALLERY AUSTRALIA, CANBERRA, ACT
NATIONAL GALLERY OF AUSTRALIA, 2004
NATIONAL GALLERY OF VICTORIA, MELBOURNE, VICTORIA
NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AUSTRALIA, 2014
NATIONAL MUSEUM OF SCOTLAND, UK
NORTHERN TERRITORY CRAFTS COUNCIL, DARWIN, NT
QUEENSLAND ART GALLERY, BRISBANE, QLD

Awards



Short St. Gallery

2022	Finalist, National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award
2021	Finalist, National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award
2018	Perpetual Gladys Elphick Award (lifetime achievement)
2016	Finalist (Collaborative), National Aboriginal And Torres Strait Islander Art Award
2009	Me and My Toyota Art Prize - Toyota Australia

Bibliography

2020	'Ngayulu Minyma Tjanpinya: I am a Tjanpi woman', Art Monthly Australasia, issue 326
2020	'Looking backwards to move forward Malaku-kutu nyawa munu kuranyu-kutu in ara' with Alison Milyika Carrolland Hannah Kothe in TARNANTHI, Art Gallery of South Australia
2018	'The sounds of an archive' with Hannah Kothe in Gail Hocking – Peripheral Disturbance: Wandering between worlds, Flinders University
2018	'Kutjupa munu mauntalpa: Men's and women's culture in the APY Lands' with Nyurpaya Kaika Burton and HannahKothe in Weapons for a Solider, Hazelhurst Regional Gallery
2017	Nyuyuntjaku: Keeping The Fire Alive, Harvey Arts, USA
2017	Desert Mob, Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs, NT
2017	'A story for our Sisters' with Nyurpaya Kaika-Burton and Hannah Kothe in TARNANTHI, Art Gallery of South Australia
2017	'Tjunkaya's story : our art centre, our history' in In these hands : mara nyangangka : celebrating 70 years ofErabella Arts. Sturt Gallery & Erabella Arts
2014	ARTKELCH, Robyn Kelch: Eastern APY Lands, exhibition catalogue Pro Community 2014, Freiburg, Germany
2014	Highlights Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collection, Nici Cumpston, Art Gallery of South Australia, p 73
2013	Togart Contemporary Art Award Prof. Sasha Grishin, Craft Arts International No.87, P.3
2012	Togart Contemporary Art Award Catalogue, P.90
2012	Tjanpi Desert Weavers, Penny Watson, Macmillan
2012	Tjanpi Desert Weavers Macmillan Mini-Art Series #19
2012	Deadly: In-Between Heaven and Hell Pp 62-71 Tjanpi Desert Weavers Paarpakani: Tjanpi Desert Weavers Take Flight Fulvia Mantelli And Renee Johnson
2011	Threads. Contemporary Textiles and The Social Fabric. Bruce Mclean, Queensland Art Gallery/Gallery of Modern Art P.133
2011	Indigenous Ceramic Art Award, Shepparton Art Museum, P.40-41
2011	Togart Contemporary Art Award Catalogue



Short St. Gallery

- 2009 Bravura. 21st Century Australian Craft. Robert Reason, Art Gallery of South Australia, P.2, P.28
- 2008 Across the Desert: Aboriginal Batik From Central Australia Judith Ryan, NGV (Artists Work On Cove And Featured Inside)