

SPINIFEX PEOPLE

KAMILÉ GALLERY

SPINIFEX PEOPLE
11 04 — 01 06

NOW WE HAVE TO LOOK AFTER THIS COUNTRY AND TEACH THE YOUNG PEOPLE

Lennard Walker

KAMILÉ GALLERY is pleased to present SPINIFEX PEOPLE, the first group exhibition with the Gallery by artists of world-renowned Spinifex Arts Project, from Tjuntjuntjara community, located in Western Australia's Great Victoria Desert.

SPINIFEX PEOPLE, showcases the work of ten Spinifex artists from different generations, enhancing the intergenerational dialogue between the seniors and the younger through visual storytelling. The Spinifex Art Movement originated in the 1990's, with two Native Title paintings depicting the country as a vehicle of reappropriation of Land. Spinifex artists, like their counterparts in other communities, have created a body of work that identifies and portrays the country within the confines of their Law, Dreaming, Ancestral Culture, and Traditions.

"Pana Miilmiilpa (This is Sacred land). Old peoples' Land. Tjamu Kapili Tjuta (all the grandmothers and grandfathers), all those old peoples finished. Now we have to look after this Country and teach the young people" Lennard Walker (Sun & Shadow, Art of the Spinifex People by John Carty)".



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Jessica Veronica Brown
Kuru Ala
Acrylic on linen
200 x 137 cm
\$9,000



Jessica Veronica Brown
Kuru Ala
Acrylic on canvas
200 x 137 cm
\$9,000



Jessica Veronica Brown
Kuru Ala
Acrylic on canvas
200 x 137 cm
\$9,000



Ian Rictor
Kamanti
Acrylic on linen
110 x 85 cm
\$4,000



Michael Hogan
Upupily- Upupilya
Acrylic on linen
200 x 137 cm
\$8,500

Pamela Hogan
Seven Sisters
Acrylic on linen
200 x 137 cm
\$8,000





Michelle Anderson
Ngura Pila
Acrylic on canvas
110 x 85 mm
\$2,700



Byron Brooks
Pila Nguru
Acrylic on linen
137 x 90 cm
\$4,000



Bruce Tjinpun Parker
Kapi Tjuta
Acrylic on linen
110 x 85 cm
\$2,700



Michelle Anderson
Ngura Pila
Acrylic on canvas
110 x 85 mm
\$2,700



Bruce Tjinpun Parker
Kapi Tjuta
Acrylic on linen
110 x 85 cm
\$2,700

Byron Brooks
Pila Nguru
Acrylic on linen
137 x 90 cm
\$4,000





Bruce Tjinpun Parker
Kapi Tjuta
Acrylic on linen
110 x 85 cm
\$2,700



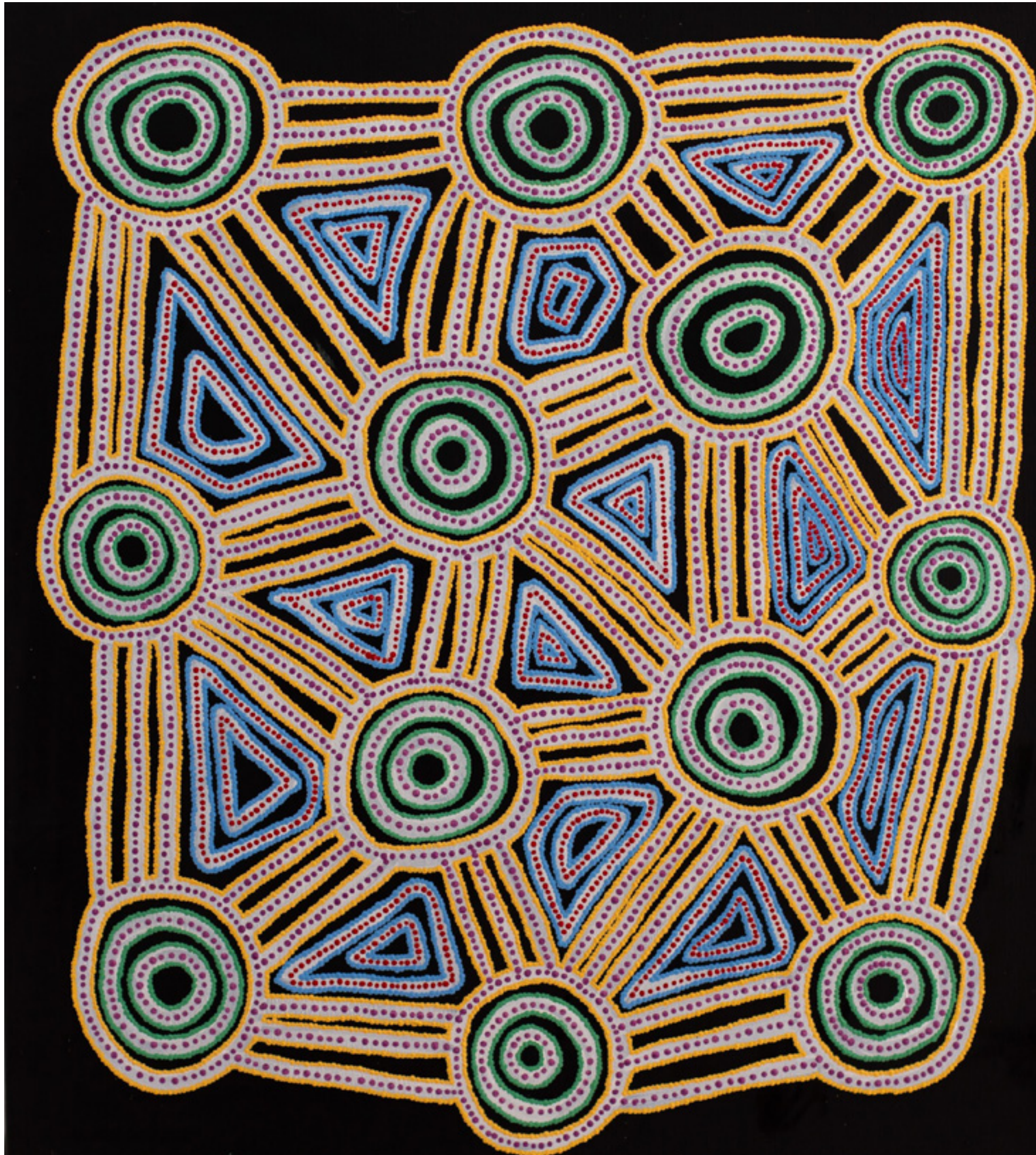
Dora Parker
Minyma Tjuta
Acrylic on linen
110 x 85 cm
\$3,500



Byron Brooks
Acrylic on canvas
950 x 85 cm
\$4,500



Ngalpingka Simms
Wayiyul
Acrylic on linen
60 x 75 cm
\$4,500



Sophia Brown
Kapi Tjukula
Acrylic on canvas
95 x 85 cm
\$2,500



Michelle Anderson
Ngura Kapiku
Acrylic on canvas
110 x 85 mm
\$2,700

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ARTISTS



BYRON BROOKS

Byron was born circa 1951 between Tjajar and Tjintirkara between a significant men's, Wati Kutjara (Two Men) and women's, Kungkara (Seven Sisters) dreaming tracks adjacent to the SA border. Byron was transported to Cundeelee Mission via Kulkapin as a 10-12 year old boy.

Although Cundeelee was over 500 kilometres from the closest point in the Spinifex homelands, life in Byron's teenage years and entry into manhood would have been quite similar, in a concentrated form, to life in Spinifex. The Cundeelee missionaries (most unusual for those times), did not attempt to erase language and culture. In fact some encouraged and assisted in the logistics around cultural activity and some learnt and became proficient in the language. The Spinifex people lived in moving camps around the mission settlement in country not dissimilar to areas in Spinifex. Traditionally the disparate nomadic family groups could only come together in good seasons for cultural business. Here at Cundeelee these pre-conditions were a constant and the dissemination of Spinifex knowledge and cultural activity thrived.

Although he was not part of the Elders group who orchestrated the return to country when Byron returned to Spinifex in the mid-1980s he immersed himself in to all things cultural as if making up for lost time. He started on the Men's native title painting in 1997 and consistently painted thereafter collaboratively and individually. With his thirst for tradition at Cundeelee, Byron managed to infuse within his consciousness the deep knowledge of country, its stories and patterns and to express them in his prolific work.

As a collaborative artist Byron has works in international and Australian collections and was a finalist in the WA Indigenous Art Awards, Perth, W.A, in 2008.



MICHAEL HOGAN

Michael was born at Cundeelee Mission in the late sixties to Simon and Estelle Hogan. He went to the Mission primary school and high school at Coonana after Cundeelee closed. He attended Wongatha Caps, a Christian Collage in Esperence and also did some schooling in Perth. Micheal married a women from Yalata and he has several children and grandchildren. He has watched from afar his parents hugely successful painting careers and in early 2023 decided he was ready and comfortable to depict his story on canvas. Micheal paints Upupily Upupilya, a very important Tjukurpa from Cundeelee.



IAN RICTOR

Ian Rictor was born at Artulin / Tuwan c1955 and is a custodian and traditional owner of Tuwan a significant site in the heart of Spinifex Country. Ian paints with a quiet reverence for the country that he depicts, from his relatively recent nomadic movements over the endless interior that makes up Spinifex Lands. Ian walked from water source to food source and beyond. This was a cultural and family existence for survival in an arid land before his family were located and 'brought in' by relatives in 1986, and they are the last of the known Aboriginal people to have remained living traditionally in the Great Victoria Desert.

Ian's compositions center on the life affirming sites he depicts and each are multi layered with meaning. Many are surrounded with secrecy and only surface details can be recorded. His site of Tuwan is where the Tjulpu Tjuta Tjukurpa (Many Birds Creation Line) manifests. This is an epic Mens' Creation narrative that follows the journey south of the Wati Nyii Nyii (Zebra Finch Men) where they place their many spears to save the world from being inundated with floodwaters.

In 1997 when the Spinifex Arts Project first began Ian was keen to join the group of painters. He took to the medium of paint on canvas with fluency and has been painting his birthplace and surrounding country since then and has exhibited and been collected in both Australia and overseas. Ian is an impressive and skilled hunter, bush mechanic and craftsman who lives in Tjuntjuntjara Community with his extended family.

ARTISTS



NGALPINGKA SIMMS

Ngalpingka Simms was born at a place in Western Australia known to Anangu (Aboriginal people) as Wayiyul. Wayiyul is a Seven Sister's site, situated to the north of Warburton Community, and is therefore a sacred site. Ngalingka spent her early days living a traditional lifestyle with her small family group and later moved into Warburton Mission where many Ngaanyatjarra people settled.

She spent many years at Warburton living a semi nomadic lifestyle and participating in traditional ceremony. Now living at Tjuntjuntjara and married to Spinifex elder Lennard Walker Ngalingka paints with the Spinifex Arts Project. She has participated with the Spinifex Artists since 1998 and is a valuable and knowledgeable member of the group who paints her homeland area associated with the Minyma Tjuta (Seven Sisters) as well as collaborative paintings.



PAMELA HOGAN

My name is Pamela Hogan and I was born in 1981 in Kalgoorlie with my mother, father, brothers and sisters. We lived at Cundalee Mission when I was just a little baby and then in 1982 we moved to Coonana - a place that's gone now. We stayed there for a little while and then moved to Yakadunya. After this, we moved to Tjuntjuntjara. I grew up in Tjuntjuntjara but then went to Kalka, in the APY Lands, and stayed there a little while. The next move was to Blackstone, where I lived a long time. I spent many years working at the Arts Centre there until finally moving back to Tjuntjuntjara in 2019. This is where a lot of my family live. It's really nice going out on Country with the old ladies now, it helps me feel connected and strong.

It's good at Tjuntjuntjara, with the old people. Happy and safe.

Pamela is from the Spinifex Lands in the Great Victoria Desert. Her family were moved off their traditional homelands in the 1960's due to the atomic testing at Maralinga and sent to the mission at Cundeelle. It took her people over 20 years to finally get back home.



BRUCE TJINPUN PARKER

Tjinpun was born in the bush outside of Irrunytju and to the north of Spinifex country at a significant site called Mamutjara. He describes a childhood period when his family walked around 'nikiti', meaning without clothing, living a traditional life in the bush. Later the family moved to Ernabella mission where Tjinpun attended school. He was initiated in Ernabella as a young man.

ARTISTS



DORA PARKER

Dora was born in the clinic at Fregon Community when people were still born 'on country'. Her family were living in Fregon due to the available work and close proximity to Ernabella Mission. Dora's family had travelled over 300 kilometres from the east, country close to Irrunytju, in Western Australia. She has a paternal connection to the significant site of Pukara a major Wati Kutjara Tjukurpa through her father. Dora paints the 'seven sisters' site of Pur- Pur in the north of traditional Spinifex Lands.

"My name is Dora Parker and I was born in Fregon, South Australia. I grew up in Wingellina (Irrunytju Community) mostly, this is where I went to school as a child. For a little while, my family and I moved to Indulkana in the APY Lands, where my mother's side of the family is from. When I was a girl, I moved back to Wingellina where my family is from and stayed there until I was a teenager. I then moved to Cundalee Mission as well as Warburton in the Ngaanyatjarra Lands. I went back and forth between places like this for a few years and then finally settled in Tjuntjuntjara, where I have stayed. My sister Norieen Parker, still visits me often from Irrunytju."



MICHELLE ANDERSON

Michelle Anderson has direct family line of great Spinifex painters. Her immediate Grandmothers are Myrtle Pennington and Myrtles younger sister Carlene West. As a young mother herself, Michelle watched from a safe distance as the acclaimed painting careers of both Myrtle and Carlene grew to great heights. She became the primary carer, as Myrtle aged gracefully, and would sit, watch and listen as her grandmother painted the significant sites of Mulplya and Kanpa. Myrtle loved having her granddaughter by her side and watching the subtle generational transference of Tjukurpa.

Michelle began to assist Myrtle during her tiring final few paintings before Myrtle became immobile by her own frailty. But this spurred Michelle into a creative pursuit to continue forward with what she'd garnered from her time with Myrtle. And in a short space of time, Michelle has succeeded in expanding her own creativity whilst keeping grounded in all she has learnt. The result is as sublime as it is individual, with the compositions expressing a new found creative palette from the roots of rich legacy.



SOPHIA BROWN

Sophia Lala Brown was born in Kalgoorlie. Her mother, whose country Pilki is just to the west of Tjuntjuntjara Community was living in Coonana at the time of Lala's birth. This is before the Spinifex People made the long journey back to their traditional Lands in the Great Victoria Desert after being displaced during the late 1950's due to the atomic testings by the British and Australian Governments. She has paternal connection to the 'Seven Sisters' significant site of Kulyuru, situated to the north of traditional Spinifex Lands. Today Lala lives in Tjuntjuntjara where as well as painting she is a leading creative with the Milpa project, a dedicated new media space managed by SAP. She and the Milpa team won the Inland Art Prize' Leonora 2019 for their short animation, Patju. Sophia is a staff member for the Spinifex Arts Project.

"My name is Lala Brown and I was born in Kalgoorlie in 1986 but grew up in Coonana with my mother, father, brother and sister. When I was older, we moved to Tjuntjuntjara and stayed with my tjamu (grandfather) on my father's side (Mr Lennard Walker). I have lived in Tjuntjuntjara most of my life and now have two beautiful children, Sweeney and Zara, who go to school in community. I have been painting and working at the Spinifex Arts Centre with my husband Timo for many years now. I love being here, on Country."



JESSICA VERONICA BROWN

Jessica Veronica Browns traditional homelands are close to the tri state border region in the Western Desert at the intersection of WA, SA and NT. Family connections ties her to country around Blackstone (Papulankutja), Wingellina (Irrunytju) and Tjuntjuntjara. Although a Pitjantjatjara woman with familiar ties to the desert she was born in Kalgoorlie hospital in 1981 while her mother was living with relatives at the Kurrawang Mission, originally established as a 'native reserve' in 1952 by the Gospel Brethren (later known as Christian Brethren). In the 1980s, it was known locally as the Kurrawang Aboriginal Christian Centre and by 1984 was a self-managed Aboriginal community with a parent-directed school on the site.

Veronica and her mother later returned to their traditional homelands and settled in Irrunytju Community. Veronica's grandmother Anmanari Brown was one of a group of artists who established Irrunytju Arts in the early 2000's paving the way for the younger generations to develop artistic careers.

Like Anmanari, Veronica often paints country around Kuru Ala, an important womens site belonging to the Kungkarangkalpa (Seven Sisters) songline. In her work traditional desert motifs are used to translate the Tjukurpa into visual works.

Veronica is one of the new group of painters working with the Spinifex Arts Project.

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