



# Short St. Gallery

## JAKAYU BILJABU



**Born** 1937  
**Language Group** Manyilyjarra  
**Region** Pilbara

### Biography

Jakayu was born a little way north of Pitu around 1937 and grew up around Pitu, Wikirri, Rarrki, Wantili and Nyinyari on the Canning Stock Route. Drivers would kill a bullock and give food to Jayaku's group. Jakayu and her sister married the same man (Jayaku's sister was the first wife.) Jakayu has two sons who were born in the bush, and one daughter born in the mission. Her father was very wary of the Europeans who increasingly travelled along the Canning Stock Route building new roads and her family waited longer than most before leaving a traditional life. Jakayu was travelling with her three children and a group of people in 1963 when they were contacted by Len Beadell, who had made the roads for the Woomera rocket range. Some people in the group Jakayu was travelling with had been to Jigalong previously, and Len told the Jigalong mission staff that they all wanted to come into the mission. Jakayu worked as a baker at the mission and several stations before moving to Strelley station for a time. In 1982 she moved to Punmu community. Jakayu has painted primarily in Punmu community, where she continued to live surrounded by her children and grandchildren, teaching her grand daughters about their history and country.

### Group Exhibitions

- 2012 Warla, Short St Gallery, Broome, WA
- 2011 Desert Mob, Araluen Centre, Alice Springs
- 2011 Revealed- Emerging Aboriginal Artists from Western Australia, Gallery Central, Perth
- 2011 Yiwarra Kuju- One Road, One People, Perth Convention Exhibition Centre, Perth
- 2011 Yiwarra Kuju- One Road, One People, Australian Museum, Sydney
- 2011 Martumili Artists, Outback Fusion Festival, Newman
- 2011 Living Water - Contemporary Art of the Far Western Desert, National Gallery of



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Victoria, Melbourne

- 2011 Waru! Holding Fire in Australia's Western Desert, Thomas Welton Stanford Art Gallery, Stanford University, San Francisco
- 2010 Jakulpa laju kartyinpa (Bringing a Message), Chapman Gallery, Canberra
- 2010 Shalom Gamarada Ngiyani Yana (We walk together as friends), Waterhole Art, Sydney
- 2010 Yiwarra Kuju- One Road, One People, National Museum of Australia, Canberra
- 2010 Warla Tjartrjal - Edge of the Lake, Short St. Gallery, Broome
- 2010 Before and After Science, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide Biennial 2010
- 2010 Martumili Group Exhibition, AP Bond gallery, Adelaide
- 2009 Yankuni Laju Kamkani Kukungka (We Are Travelling Together By Air), RedDot Gallery, Singapore
- 2009 Puntu Kurnu (Belongs to the People), Newman Visitors Centre, Newman
- 2009 Nintijunu (Teaching), Aboriginal and Pacific Art Gallery, Sydney
- 2009 Warranpalampaju Kayili Yaninpa (Our Country Travelling North), RAFT Artspace, Darwin
- 2008 Ngurra Waltja Wakarni (We Are Painting Country), Short St Gallery, Broome
- 2008 Jitirangu (Rainbow), Randell Lane Art Gallery, Perth
- 2008 Martumili Artists Recent Works, William Mora Galleries, Melbourne
- 2008 Martumili Artists, Port Hedland Courthouse Art Centre and Gallery, Port Hedland
- 2008 Laltu Tujuparaku, Yulpalpa Yimparaku (Lots of Women, Little Bit Men), Aboriginal and Pacific Art Gallery, Sydney
- 2007 Martu-la Wakarnu Kuwarri Wiyaju, William Mora Galleries, Melbourne
- 2006 Pamngurr Artists, Stanford University, California

## Awards

- 2009 Best work by a Pilbara-based Artist, Port Hedland Art Award
- 2011 Finalist, Hedland Art Award, Courthouse Gallery, Port Hedland

## Collections

National Museum of Australia  
National Gallery of Victoria