



# Short St. Gallery

## Sandra Mungulu



<b>Born</b>	1961
<b>Language Group</b>	Worrorra
<b>Region</b>	Fitzroy / West Kimberley

### Biography

Sandra Mungulu is a local Mowanjum artist who has secured an international reputation. Her work is held in numerous private collections. *Calder & Chanley Wandinjinias (2009)* was selected for the sharing difference on common ground exhibition, showcasing the work of Kimberley Indigenous artists at the Holmes, a Court Gallery in Perth, during October 2009. The project was the brainchild of the KAA collective of Kimberley Art Centres and the exhibition was accompanied by a publication featuring writers such as Judith Ryan and Darren Jorgensen. The exhibition is now touring nationally through Art on the Move.

Sandra started painting in the late 1990's when she was in her late twenties. She was inspired when, "visiting my late father-in-law David Mowajarlai. He told us stories of his artworks which he was doing at home." David was brought up in the missionary settlement at Kunmunya, where Aboriginal culture was accepted and ceremonial practices allowed. People went bush during the wet season and were allowed to take their children with them to fish and hunt and learn their culture's stories. As with other artist at Mowanjum, having a place to paint gave old people a chance to talk about the meaning of the Wandjina and transfer their culture to the younger generation.

Sandra was one of "the younger generation". She learnt how to paint wandjinias and gyorns through this process and says that she likes the stories she paints, "learning how to describe the stories on canvas as I paint the pictures".

Sandra belongs to the Mungulu dynasty of painters which include "my mother Gudu and sisters Marjorie, Margaret, Mildred, Robyn and myself. My daughters Carmen and Deidre were painting too, and my son used to work with pearl shells".

Sandra likes working in acrylics and now she is painting in ochre "which is alright once you know how to mix the ochre with binder. When I started painting, I used paper, canvas, then bark."

The significance of the original representations in the cave paintings is reflected again and again in Sandra's contemporary practice. She views it as "being the passing on of beliefs and



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messages from our ancestors. I believe the Wandjina was like God because our people didn't know about god until they came to the caves. The Wandjina painting is like following the ten commandments and floods, like in the bible."

Sandra was born at Derby Hospital and went to school in Derby where she completed three years in high school and then she completed her fourth year in Perth. Sandra has trained and worked as a bookkeeper, child and aged person carer and undertaken Community Health studies at Curtin University.

She has four children, two girls and two boys. "Carmen is the oldest, Aaron then Deidre and Raymond, the youngest. I have nine grandchildren now. The girls used to paint, and Aaron used to work on pearl shell" A partner of Henry Mowaljarlai, Sandra has many memories of watching her father-in-law David (deceased) creating his own Wandjina art.

Sandra's father Alan (dec) and David were fully initiated members of the Ngarinyin tribe and the first two ordained elders in the church. David was deeply concerned with the preservation of his culture and responsible for suggesting the name "Mowanjum" ("settled at last") for the community.

Sandra is both a prolific and passionate painter. Sandra produces beautifully balanced work, rich in stories and legends that show her deep understanding of her strong traditional cultural beliefs.

## Group Exhibitions

2017	paintings & prints Derby Christmas Markets
2017	Paintings Taranthi Art Fair (Adelaide, South Australia)
2017	paintings Darwin Art Fair
2009	Sharing Difference on Common Ground – Holmes a Court Gallery & touring nationally
2009	Mowanjum Festival – Mowanjum Art and Culture Centre, Derby
2009	Kimberley Art Prize – Derby Western Australia
2008	Shinju Matsuri Wandjina Budda Budding – Broome 6 Gallery
2008	Mowanjum Festival – Mowanjum Art and Culture Centre 2008 Kimberley Art Prize - Derby W.A
2008	Cultural Connections - Artitja Art Gallery Perth
2008	Spirit of the Wandjina - Shinju Matsuri Exhibition Broome 6 Gallery
2007	Mowanjum Festival - Mowanjum Art and Culture Centre, Derby
2007	Arralululai- Broome 6 Gallery
2007	Mowanjum Exhibition - Woodford Dreaming Festival, QLD
2006	Spirit of the Wandjina - Governor Stirling Tower, Perth
2006	Power of the Wandjina - Macquarie University Sydney
2005	Spirit of the Wandjina - Broome 6 Gallery
2005	Keeping the Wandjinas Fresh - Exhibition and book launch - Alexander Library Perth



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2005	Mowanjum Festival
2005	Mowanjum Exhibition - Festival of the Dreaming Woodford, QLD
2004	Mowanjum Exhibition- Sydney Dreaming Festival
2004	Mowanjum Festival
2003	Mowanjum Festival
2003	Spirit of the Wandjina - Harvey Bay QLD
2002	Visions from the Cave- Sun Picture Theatre, Broome
2002	Mowanjum Festival
2001	Recent Works- Melbourne Spirit of the Wandjina Gallery
2001	Mowanjum Festival
2000	The Art of the Wandjina - Sydney Olympics Exhibition, NSW
2000	Spirit of the Wandjina - Compass Travel Postonja Slovenia
2000	Mowanjum Festival
2000	Spirit of the Wandjina Exhibition - Melbourne
1999	5th Telstra Art Award - Museum and Art Gallery of the NT- Darwin
1999	Power of the Wandjina - Telstra National Headquarters - Melbourne
1999	Recent Works - Spirit of the Wandjina Gallery, Melbourne
1999	Power of the Wandjina - Governor Stirling Tower, Perth
1999	Spirit of the Wandjina Exhibition - Governor Place, Sydney
1999	Mowanjum Festival
1998	Spirit of the Wandjina -Telstra National Headquarters, Melbourne
1998	Mowanjum Festival
1998	Mowanjum Wandjina Art – Matzo's Broome
1998	Spirit of the Wandjina –Grosvenor Place, Sydney

## **Collections**

Numerous private collections

Wallungunder Lai Lai, sold for \$21,000 to private collector in Los Angeles

## **Publications**

Sotheby's Catalogue November 2007, Collaborative work by Mowanjum Artists including Sandra Mungulu \$35,000 sold to Los Angeles Museum