

Short St. Gallery



RAMMEY RAMSEY

Born c1935
Language Group Gija
Region West Kimberley

BIOGRAPHY

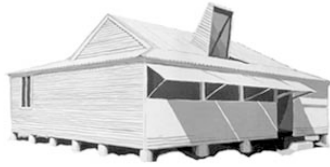
Rammey Ramsey, a senior Gija man of Jungurra skin, was born on Old Greenvale Station which is now part of Bow River Station. His own country and that of his parents is a part of Gija country in an area to the west of Bedford Downs near Elgee Cliffs. His Gija name, Warlawoon is the general name for the whole of that area of country.

Rammey Ramsey lived in Warlawoon country walking in the bush with his family when very young then moved to Bedford Downs and worked there as a young man. He spent some time working at Landsdowne Station. He then moved to Bow River Station and has lived there ever since.

Ramsey began painting for Jirrawun Arts in 2000. In October 2000 his pictures were part of an exhibition with Hector Jandany, Timmy Timms and Paddy Bedford at William Mora Galleries in Melbourne called Gaagambi 'Poor Things'. The title of that show being a word used as a term of endearment, sympathy and sorrow. It is a word used by many people to express feelings about the country that is mostly lost to them, their predecessors who walked in it freely and the way of life that is gone.

Ramsey was one of the painters featured in the 'Four Men Paintings' exhibition at Raft Galleries in Darwin in March 2001. This was followed by a sell-out solo show at Raft Galleries during May 2001.

Rammey was a key figure in the production of the Bedford Downs massacre Joonba that was staged at the 2000 Telstra Art Award.



Short St. Gallery

He is an inspired dancer who helped train the young boys in dancing. He and Rusty Peters made the dance poles used in the original Joonba. He was also an actor and dancer with the Neminuwarlin Performance Group in its production of Fire, Fire Buring Bright incorporating the Joonba which premiered at the Perth International Festival of the Arts in February 2002 and opened the Melbourne International Festival of the Arts at the State Theatre of Victoria from 17-20 October 2002.

Rammey Ramsey is true to his law painting only country that he has rights to through birth and family. Most of his paintings are of the stunning gorge country north west of Halls Creek in an area surrounding Elgee Cliffs. He shows the places where the Rock Wallaby live and camping areas near waterholes. The painting and the man are the essence of strength and tenderness. The paint is applied with love and vigour, the dots like pearls stitched on a bed of pink and black raw silk. Images of cliffs, hills, rock wallaby holes, camping places, rivers, rocks in the river bed, waterholes, roads, stockyards and meeting places appear as distillations of important features of the landscape. A line might be a road or a river, a circle a waterhole, a place or a cave, a rectangle stock yards or hills. In paintings in the exhibition entitled 'Deeper than paint on canvas' at William Mora Galleries the artist has evolved the dynamics of his artistic language. Red paint that once surrounded the black representational forms of hills, rivers and stockyards are now atmospheric fields that move in degrees from white pink and red.

The artist observing his great friend Paddy Bedford painting, commented one morning that he wished to paint the Ngarranggarni way - meaning in technical terms the mixing of wet in wet of two colours on the surface of the canvas to create the gestural strokes and rhythm of the brush - spiritually a way to represent the four elements of life, earth, wind, fire and water. These new paintings are not the usual representations of country but are an important development in Gija art because they also convey the language of natural elements, so crucial in Aboriginal communication and foreseeing of events. In the painting, 'Elgee Cliffs horse branding iron' an arabesque shape representing a branding iron flats in a field of wind and dust as though the iron conjures a vision of bullocks, kicking up a cloud of Kimberley dust. These are wonderful atmospheric paintings that convey a range of different natural experiences such as mist and rain to the crackling heat and smoke of a Kimberley gas fire.

Rammey has spent a life time quietly in the bush working as a stockman and caring for his family. His real father died before he was born and his mother died of a snakebite when he was only a baby so he never knew his own parents. Retired and now working as a painter and continuing his role as a loving husband, father, grandfather and great grandfather with many children, grandchildren and great grandchildren who have the benefit of his care and knowledge. His paintings are an expression of a loving and gentle man who has known the hardships and beauty of life and above all a gift to convey knowledge and compassion through his art and most of all through unassuming and humble humanity. Rammey Ramsey continues to paint with Warmun Art Centre.



Short St. Gallery

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

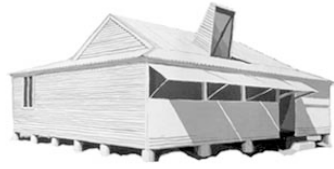
- 2011 New Work by Rammey Ramsey - Seva Frangos Gallery
- 2004 Rammey Ramsey - Deeper than paint on canvas - William Mora Galleries, Melbourne
- 2003 Rammey Ramsey - RAFT Artspace Darwin
- 2001 Rammey Ramsey - RAFT Artspace Darwin

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

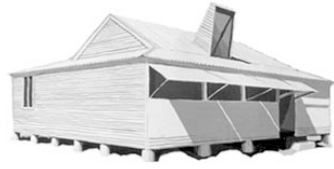
- 2019 Desert River Sea, AGWA, Perth WA
- 2019 Beyond the surface of the Dreaming – Warmun & Jirrawun , Estrangin Gallery, Brussels
- 2018 Jooroob 'Coming Together' Exhibition – Aboriginal Contemporary
- 2018 GJA Exhibition , Woolloongabba Art Gallery, QLD – An exhibition honouring the Warmun artists, and 20 years of the Gija art movement
- 2018 Warmun at Twenty Exhibition, Nancy Sever Gallery, Canberra
- 2017 Jirrawun Collection- TARNANTHI Festival, Art Gallery of SA, Adelaide
- 2017 When the Sky Fell- Legacies of the 1967 Referendum. PICA, Perth WA
- 2017 Spiritual essence of the earth with Warmun Artists- Estrangin Gallery, Brussels
- 2016 Middle Distance, Hanging Valley
- 2015 LIVELY: New Prints from Warmun Arts - Nomad Arts, Darwin NT
- 2015 32nd Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award, MAGNT
- 2014 Warmun: Gija Contemporary Art of Western Australia - Harvey Art Projects, USA
- 2013 Gija Manambarram Jimerawoon (Gija Senior Law People Forever) – Australian Embassy Paris, France
- 2010 Gaagambi - Poor Things - William Mora Galleries, Melbourne
- 2010 Four Men, Four Paintings - RAFT Artspace Darwin
- 2006 Jirrawun Artists - Melbourne Art Fair - William Mora Galleries with Jirrawun Arts
- 2005 Jirrawun in the House A Contemporary Experience from the East Kimberley – Parliament House, Canberra
- 2005 Beyond the Frontier - Sherman Galleries, Sydney
- 2003 Jirrawun Jazz - RAFT Artspace Darwin

AWARDS

- 2014 Alice Prize Finalist
- 2015 32nd Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award



Short St. Gallery



Short St. Gallery