



Short St. Gallery

George Cooley

Born 1953
Language Yanyuwa
Region Umoona, APY Lands



Biography

George Cooley is a senior man and community leader from Coober Pedy. He holds leadership positions across the Umoona and Coober Pedy communities and is a talented artist and opal miner. George paints the landscape surrounding his Country, particularly the Breakaways, an important site 25km north of Coober Pedy, known for its spectacular hills, mesas and plains.

George says: "My story is about the painted desert landscapes, landscaping of country and the environment of Coober Pedy. I've been living in Coober Pedy since 1958. I try to capture the beauty of the ochre colours around the country I love. Granite rocks, hills, mulga scrubs. The way the colours change in different seasons, the red dirt as you go further north. As an opal miner, I also capture the brilliant colours of the opals and the way in blends in with the ochre shades. Using these colours reminds me of living on Country and the many campsites that we used to visit when the old people were still around."

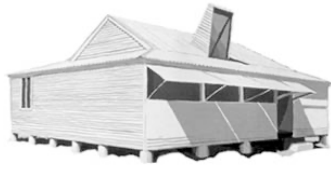
George was selected as finalist in the 2023, 2024 and 2025 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, 2024 and 2025 Wynne Prize and included in the 2024 Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art: Inner Sanctum.

Solo Exhibitions

2025 Painting Country for the Grandfathers, APY Gallery Collingwood Yards, Melbourne, VIC
2022 The Breakaways, APY Gallery, Melbourne, VIC

Group Exhibitions

2025 Hadleys Art Prize Finalist, Hadleys Orient Hotel, Hobart, TAS
2025 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islands Art Awards (NATSIAA) Finalist,



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	Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, NT
2025	Wynne Prize, Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney, NSW
2025	Malka Prize, Yarta Purtli Gallery, Port Augusta, SA
2024	Ames Yavuz Gallery, Sydney Contemporary, Carriageworks, Sydney, NSW
2024	National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islands Art Awards (NATSIAA), Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, NT
2024	Wynne Prize, Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney, NSW
2024	2024 Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, SA
2024	Bright Shiny Things – New Works from Coober Pedy, APY Gallery Adelaide, SA
2024	Milpatjunanyi: Contemporary Drawing from the APY Lands, APY Gallery, SA
2023	National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islands Art Awards (NATSIAA), Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, NT
2023	Stories from Many Places, APY Gallery Melbourne, VIC
2022	Painted Desert, APY Gallery Melbourne, Melbourne, VIC
2022	Tjamuku – For the Grandfathers, APY Gallery Sydney, Sydney, NSW
2022	Opal Country, APY Gallery Adelaide, Adelaide, NSW
2021	Umoona – Art From Umoona and Coober Pedy, APY Gallery Adelaide, Adelaide, SA