



Short St. Gallery



Bugai Whyoulter

Born: 1939
Language: Kartujarra
Region: The Pilbara, WA

Bugai is a Kartujarra woman and a senior custodian of the lands surrounding Kunawarritji (Canning Stock Route Well 33). She was born in the 1940s at Pukayiyirna, on present day Balfour Downs Station, though her parents soon travelled northward with her through Jigalong and Nullagine toward Kunawarritji. She grew up, walked and hunted with her parents, younger sister Pinyirr Nancy Patterson (dec.), and extended family, primarily travelling around the eastern side of the Karlamily (Rudall River) region and along the midsection of the Canning Stock Route, from Kartarru (Canning Stock Route Well 24) to Kunawarritji (Canning Stock Route Well 33). As a young woman Bugai travelled up and down large tracts of the 1850km long Canning Stock Route, where she and her husband met and walked with cattle drovers.

In 1963 Bugai's family encountered the surveyor Len Beadell, who was then grading roads for the Woomera Missile Testing Range. He gave the family flour, which Bugai was able to use to show her relatives how to cook a simple damper (flat bread). Bugai had herself been taught how to bake with flour during her earlier interactions with drovers in her travels on the Stock Route. Shortly afterward Bugai, her husband and the extended family group she was with at the time together decided to move to Jigalong Mission. There they joined many other relatives that had already travelled in from the desert following a prolonged and severe drought. They were some of the last Martu to leave the desert.

From Jigalong Bugai moved to Aboriginal communities in Strelley, Punmu, and Parngurr before relocating to Kunawarritji Aboriginal community in more recent years, where she continues to live today. There she was taught to paint by renowned artists Nora Nungabar (Nyangapa) (dec.) and Nora Wompi (dec.). The three women painted together as often as possible. For a long time Bugai wove baskets, watching the other women painting. Later, she explained that she had been uncertain how to begin.



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Today Bugai is known as a master of colour, gesture and subtlety. Her self-reflective works are layered with distinctively delicate brush marks, with subtle colour changes representing landmarks, water sources, and desert flora. Bugai's work was selected for the 2019, 2018 and 2013 Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, the 2012 Bankwest Contemporary Art Prize and Hedland Art Award, and the 2010 Western Australian Indigenous Art Award. Bugai won the 'General Painting' award at the Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Art Award in 2021. She has held regular solo exhibitions, and her work has been acquired by several major institutions in Australia, including The National Museum of Australia, the National Gallery of Victoria, and Queensland Art Gallery's Gallery of Modern Art.

Solo Exhibitions

- 2023 Tamaranthi 2023 – Art Gallery of South Australia
- 2023 Ngayu Bugai (I am Bugai), Paul Johnstone Gallery, Darwin, NT
- 2022 Bugai Whyoulter, Survey Exhibition (2015 – 2021) Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne, VIC
- 2019 Bugai, The Goods Shed, Claremont, WA
- 2011 Jartijiti (33) Bugai Whyoulter, Seva Frangos Art, Perth, WA
- 2010 Bugai Whyoulter, Aboriginal and Pacific Art, Sydney, NSW

Group Exhibitions

- 2024 Following in Footsteps, Martumili Gallery, Newman, WA
- 2024 How To Swim, Edwina Corlette, New Farm, QLD
- 2023 Paper Wangka (Paper Story), Chapman and Bailey, Melbourne, VIC
- 2023 Desert Mob 2023 – Araluen Art Centre, Alice Springs
- 2023 TDF Collect Presents: "Martumili Artists" – Collingwood, VIC
- 2023 Crossing Country, Artija Fine Art Gallery, South Fremantle, WA
- 2023 Le Chant Aborigene des Sept Soeurs, IDAIA, Paris, France
- 2023 Songlines - Centres d'art du desert australien, IDAIA/ Australian Embassy, Paris, France
- 2022 Rawa - A long time, Aboriginal Contemporary, Sydney, NSW
- 2022 Waru (Fire), Martumili Gallery, Newman, WA
- 2022 Nyinani (Staying put), Martumili Gallery, Newman, WA
- 2022 Paper Wangka (paper story)
- 2022 Tracks We Share, Art Gallery of Western Australia (curated by FORM), Perth WA
- 2021 Martumili Mob, The Courthouse Gallery, Port Hedland, WA
- 2021 Paper Wangka (Paper Story), Martumili Gallery, Newman, WA
- 2021 Pukurlpa (happy inside), Martumili Gallery, Newman, WA
- 2020 Martumili Ngurra - Our Country, Aboriginal Contemporary, Bronte, NSW
- 2020 Belonging to Martu, Harvey Arts Project, Idaho, US



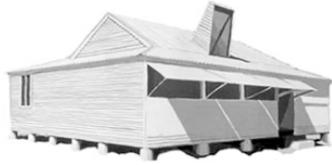
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2020	Ngurra Means Home, Martumili Gallery, Newman, WA
2020	Strong Country, Paul Johnstone Gallery, Darwin, NT
2020	Matriarchs 2020, Paul Johnstone Gallery, Darwin, NT
2020	I know my country, Artitja Fine Art Gallery, Perth, WA
2020	Living Water, Aboriginal Contemporary, Waverley NSW
2020	Kujungka- Young and Old Together, Aboriginal Signature, Brussels, Belgium
2020	Contemporary Desert Art, Dellasposa, London, UK
2019	Punmukarti!, Yaama Gaanu, Moree NSW
2019	Nyumma (burnt Country), Paul Johnstone Gallery, Darwin NT
2018	Hedland Art Award, The Courthouse Gallery, Port Hedland, WA
2018	Wantili - Bugai & Cyril Whyolter, 2018
2018	Warla Tuwa, Aboriginal Contemporary, Bronte NSW
2018	Martuku Ninti (Martu Knowledge), Vivien Anderson Gallery, Melbourne VIC
2018	Pujiman, Martumili Artists and Spinifex Hill Artists, Port Hedland Courthouse Gallery, WA
2018	Voice of the custodians of the Homeland: Martumili, Aboriginal Signature Estrangin Gallery, Bruxelles
2017	Hedland Art Award, The Courthouse Gallery, Port Hedland, WA
2017	Art at the Heart, Martumili Gallery, Newman, WA
2017	Desert Mob, Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs, NT
2017	Community Life, Martumili Gallery, Newman, WA
2017	After The Rains, Martumili Gallery, Newman, WA
2017	Flight: Aboriginal Perspectives from the Sky, FORM Gallery, Perth
2017	Women of Martu, Suzanne O'Connell Gallery, Brisbane, QLD
2016	Three Deserts Singing
2016	Martumili Artists – Nyliangkurr
2016	Desert Mob
2016	Hedland Art Award
2016	August 33: Wompi Bugai Nungabar
2016	January Summer Salon and Art Parade
2015	Palya, Martumili Artists, Tjarliri Art and Warakurna Artists
2015	Leading Ladies
2015	Tamanthi
2015	Desert Mob
2015	Martumili Artists
2015	Pukurpa - Good Inside
2015	Together as One Martu - Art from the far Western Desert
2015	The Summer Collectors Show 2015
2014	Martumili
2014	Martu Art From the Western Desert
2014	Desert Mob
2014	Malya Yuturringu; be a star



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- 2014 Right Now
- 2013 Salon des Refuses, Paul Johnstone Gallery, Darwin
- 2013 Ngayunlu-laju partumparakula kujungka: Old people painting together
- 2013 Painting It Martu Way, Art Mob, Hobart
- 2013 Selected works by the Martumili Artists, Raft Artspace, Alice Springs
- 2013 The Great Sandy Desert, Yaama Ganu Gallery, Moree
- 2012 We Don't Need A Map: a Martu experience of the Western Desert
- 2012 Martumili Artists 2012, Merenda Gallery, Perth
- 2012 Deserts & Rivers, FORM Gallery, Perth
- 2012 Desert Mob, Araluen Centre, Alice Springs
- 2012 Warla: an explanation of the salt lakes in the Great Sandy Desert, Short Street Gallery, Broome
- 2012 Martumili Artists Recent Works, William Mora Gallery, Melbourne
- 2012 Martumili Artists at Art Mob, Art Mob, Hobart
- 2011 Yiwarra Kuju – One Road, One People, Perth Convention Exhibition Centre, Perth
- 2011 Yiwarra Kuju – One Road, One People, Australian Museum, Sydney
- 2011 Waru! Holding Fire in Australias Western Desert, Thomas Welton Gallery, Stanford University, San Francisco
- 2011 Green, Outstation, Darwin
- 2011 Martumili Artists, Outback Fusion Festival, Newman
- 2011 Jakulpa laju kartyinpa (Bringing a message), Chapman Gallery, Canberra
- 2010 Shalom Gamarada Ngiyani Yana (We walk together as friends), Waterhole Art, Sydney
- 2010 Warla Tjartjal (Edge of the Lake), Short Street Gallery, Broome
- 2010 Yiwarra Kuju – One Road, One People, National Museum of Australia, Canberra 2010 January Martumili Group Exhibition, Redot Art Gallery, Singapore
- 2009 Desert Mob, Araluen Centre, Alice Springs
- 2009 Yankuni laju kamkani kujungka (We are travelling together by air), Red Dot Gallery, Singapore
- 2009 Warranpalampaju kayili yaninpa (Our Country travelling north), Raft Art Space, Darwin
- 2009 Wangka-Lampaju (Our Story), Randell Lane Gallery, Perth
- 2009 Warranpalampa (Our Country), William Mora Galleries, Melbourne
- 2008 Ngurra waltja wakarni (We are painting country), Short St Gallery, Broome
- 2008 Martumili Artists Recent Works, William Mora Galleries, Melbourne
- 2008 Jitirangu (Rainbow), Randell Lane Gallery, Perth
- 2008 Laltu tujuparaku, yulpalpa yimaparaku (Lots of women, little bit men), Aboriginal and Pacific Art, Sydney



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Collections

Art Gallery Of Western Australia
Gallery Of Modern Art, Queensland Art Gallery
Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection Of The University Of Virginia
National Gallery Of Victoria
National Museum Of Australia

Awards

2022	Finalist, Hadleys Art Prize
2021	Best Painting, 38 th Telstra NATSIAA Awards
2019	Finalist, 36 th Telstra NATSIAA Awards
2018	Finalist, 35 th Telstra NATSIAA Awards
2013	Finalist, Glencore Art Centre Award
2013	Finalist, 29 th Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award
2012	Finalist, Hedland Art Award
2012	Finalist, Bankwest Contemporary Art Prize Awards
2010	Finalist, Western Australian Indigenous Art Awards