

Short St. Gallery

Mala Nari (Matosi)

Birth c. 1958 – 2015.
Language Ömie
Region Oro Province, Papua New Guinea



Biography

Mala's mother was Waganami Togarino of Gora village (Saro'ore clan) and her father was A'oiji Ngunna of Godibehi village (Ematé clan). Mala has three children. Her husband, now passed, was Elo Nari. Mala was taught to paint Ömie designs by her grandmother and remembers watching her at Kërö village (an old village of Gora) as a young girl. Mala loved to sit with her grandmother and learn about Ömie history, the natural environment and how to nurture the land.

Mala's main designs are: tuböru unö'e - eggs of the Dwarf Cassowary; dahoru'e - Ömie mountains; munë'e/hitai - river boulders; buboriano'e - beaks of the Papuan Hornbill; and odunaigö'e - jungle vines. From 1996 to 2002, before the arrival of David Baker and the formation of the Ömie Artists cooperative, Mala was instrumental in bringing about a revitalisation of barkcloth painting in Jiapa and Duharenu villages. She is a very strong culture woman and is well known across Ömie territory for her powerful singing voice. Her work was exhibited in the 17th Biennale of Sydney at the Museum of Contemporary Art and in the landmark exhibition of Ömie art *Wisdom of the Mountain: Art of the Ömie* at the National Gallery of Victoria International.

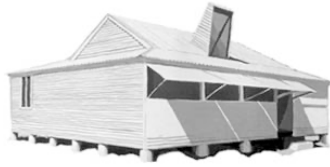
Exhibitions

2023 [upcoming] JGM Gallery, London, UK
2022 [upcoming] Aboriginal Signature - Estrangin Fine Art Gallery, Brussels, Belgium
2021 Sydney Oceanic Arts Fair (SOAF), National Art School, Sydney, Australia
2021 Spirit in Bark: A Celebration of Bark Art from Across Oceania (group exhibition with Maningrida Arts & Culture and Elcho Island Arts), Koskela, Sydney, Australia
2020 The Feeling of Mountain Forest: Ömie Art of New Guinea (Online Christmas Exhibition)
2020 Where Clouds Are Spirit Parrots: Art of the Ömie Women, Delmar Gallery, Sydney, Australia
2019 [Focused display of Oro Province barkcloths from the collection in the Melanesia gallery], National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, Australia



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- 2019 Oceanic Art Society Tribal Art Fair, National Art School, Sydney, Australia
- 2018 Ömie Revealed: Bark from Papua New Guinea, Short Street Gallery, Broome, Australia
- 2018 Art of the Ömie, JGM Gallery, London, England
- 2017 Nom'e Javavamu Darugé I'jové (We Dance Our Designs To Life), ReDot Fine Art Gallery, Singapore
- 2016 Moonlight, Mountains and Pig Tusks: painted Wisdom of the Ömie Chiefs, Vivien Anderson Gallery, Melbourne
- 2016 The Sacred Mountain, Illuminated: Ömie Barkcloth Art of Papua New Guinea, Aboriginal Signature - Estrangin Fine Art, Brussels, Belgium
- 2015 Hijominoe Modejade (Guided by Ancestors): Ömie Artists 10th Anniversary Exhibition, Andrew Baker Art Dealer, Brisbane, QLD
- 2015 Duvahé Nioge: Barkcloths by the Senior Ömie Artists of Papua New Guinea, Vivien Anderson Gallery, Melbourne
- 2015 AN Exploration of Bark (in association with Ömie Artists and Maningrida Arts & Culture), Outstation Gallery, Darwin
- 2015 Under the Volcano: Art of Ömie from PNG, Museum Fünf Kontinente, Munich, Germany
- 2014 Luminous Mountain, Andrew Baker Art Dealer, Brisbane, QLD
- 2014 Ömie Artists: Contemporary Tapa from PNG, ArtKelch, Freiburg & Stuttgart, Germany
- 2014 To Dance in Beauty: Ömie Tapa from New Guinea, Black Dot Gallery, Melbourne
- 2014 Nohi jajwe boromu mai dahoru Huvaimo va'ene (Our Culture is Strong like Our Mountain, Huvaimo), Harvey Art Projects, Sun Valley, ID, USA
- 2013 Volcanic Visions: Barkcloth Art of the Ömie, Cavin-Morris Gallery, New York USA
- 2012 Nohi Dahoru'e - Nohi Nioge (Our Mountain - Our Art), The Depot Gallery, Sydney, NSW
- 2012 Contemporary Ömie Barkcloth, de Young Museum, San Francisco USA
- 2012 Art of the Ömie: Barkcloth paintings from PNG, Harvey Art Projects, Sun Valley ID, USA
- 2012 Second Skins: Painted Barkcloth from New Guinea and Central Africa, Fowler Museum at UCLA, Los Angeles
- 2012 Nohi niogero aru'aho ma'ene munomehi jajuho (Our barkcloth holds the spirit of our culture", RAFT Artspace, Alice Springs
- 2011 Barkcloth Paintings by Ömie Chiefs and Elders, William Mora Galleries, Melbourne
- 2011 No si hijomiono'o jabesi sor'e jajivo (We are painting the designs of our ancestors), ReDot Fine Art Gallery, Singapore
- 2010 Rweromo garé niogehu mamabahe ajivé (Come and see the beauty and brightness of our barkcloths), Chapman Gallery, Canberra
- 2010 17th Biennale of Sydney: The Beauty of Distance - Songs of Survival in a Precarious Age, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney



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- 2010 The Art of Ömie, William Mora Galleries, Melbourne
2009 Wisdom of the Mountain: Art of the Ömie, National Gallery of Victoria International, Melbourne
2009 Ömie: Barkcloths from New Guinea, Annandale Galleries, Sydney
2008 Ömie Art of Mt. Lamington, New Guinea Gallery, Sydney

Bibliography

Appel, Michaela; Kelch, Robyn; and King, Brennan, Ömie Artists [exhibition catalogue], ArtKelch, Freiburg & Staatliches Museum Für Völkerkunde München, Germany 2014

Balai, Sana; Modjeska, Drusilla; and Ryan, Judith, Wisdom of the Mountain: Art of the Ömie, National Gallery of Victoria International, Melbourne 2009

Child, Charlie; Guerrini-Maraldi, Jennifer, Art of the Ömie (exhibition catalogue), JGM Gallery, London, England 2018

Elliott, David (ed.), 17th Biennale of Sydney: Beauty of Distance - Songs of Survival in a Precarious Age, Thames & Hudson 2010

Gregory, Bill; Mojeska, Drusilla; and Mora, William, The Art of Ömie (ex. cat.) William Mora Galleries, Melbourne & Annandale Galleries, Sydney 2010

Gregory, Bill; and Ryan, Judith, Ömie: The Art of Ömie (ex. cat.), Annandale Galleries, Sydney 2009

King, Brennan, Jjominöe Modéjadé (Guided by Ancestors): Ömie Artists 10th Anniversary Exhibition (ex. cat.), Andrew Baker Art Dealer, Brisbane, 2015

Wilson, Natalie, "Barkcloth revival: Women who paint their wisdom", LOOK, Art Gallery Society of New South Wales, December 2012/January 2013, pp 18-19

Luminous Mountain (ex cat) Andrew Baker Art Dealer 2014

Collections

National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Sammlung Alison & Peter W. Klein, Eberdigen-Nussdorf, Germany