



Short St. Gallery

Myrtle Pennington

Born 1939
Language Pitjantjatjara
Region Tjuntjuntjara : WA



Biography

Myrtle was born c. 1939 in the vicinity of a rock hole called Kanpa in central Spinifex. The rock hole itself is a point along a highly sensitive senior Men's tjukurpa which Myrtle would not have seen or drawn water from.

Myrtle's journey out of Spinifex to Cundeelee Mission in the late 1950's was particularly tragic for Myrtle and her family (a son and husband perished on the trip). Myrtle, with another son and daughter, were eventually located by Australian servicemen from an army base at Neale's Junction, who held them until Cundeelee Mission staff arrived to take the family to Cundeelee.

The story of Myrtle's flight from the British atomic testing range at Maralinga was to become key evidence tendered to Royal Commission into the British Nuclear Tests in Australia in 1984 and sadly Myrtle had to re-live the tragic events. Myrtle and her surviving son and daughter were awarded individual compensation from the Australian Government.

Myrtle did not paint on the Women's Native Title painting and gradually came into the Project through Women's collaborative art. She was mostly an occasional painter until the past decade when almost overnight she developed a most striking, minimal style with bold symbols that leap out against a vividly plain background. Myrtle continues to paint regularly, seemingly unaffected by others styles evolving around her.

Myrtle's work features in major collections around Australia and internationally.

Solo Exhibitions

- 2019 Witamin - The Art of Myrtle Pennington, in conjunction with Outstation and Paul Johnstone Galleries, Darwin. NT
2018 Myrtle Pennington Solo, Aboriginal and Pacific Arts, Sydney, NSW

Group Exhibitions

- 2022 MINYMA, Aboriginal and Pacific Arts, Sydney, NSW
2022 Short Street Gallery Broome



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- 2022 Aluni - Resonance - Aboriginal Signature Estrangin Gallery, Brussels, Belgium
- 2022 Residence of the Australian Ambassador - Brussels, Belgium
- 2020 Spinifex Artists - On Our Country, Japingka Gallery Fremantle. W.A.
- 2020 50 fifty 2020 - John Curtin Gallery. Western Australia.
- 2020 Art Paris 2020, ARTKELCH at Art Paris 2020, Paris, France
- 2019 Journey through Culture, for Tarnanthi Festival in conjunction with Redot Gallery and nthspace Adelaide
- 2019 36th Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum and Art Gallery of NT. Darwin. NT
- 2019 Explosion, Aboriginal Signature • Estrangin Gallery, Brussels, Belgium
- 2019 Womens Show, Vivien Anderson Gallery, Melbourne
- 2019 Art Karlsruhe 2019, ARTKELCH at art Karlsruhe 2019, Karlsruhe, Germany
- 2018 DesertMob 2018, Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs, Northern Territory
- 2018 Spinifex People Spinifex Land - A Collection of Fine Spinifex Indigenous Art, ReDot Fine Art Gallery, Singapore
- 2018 Nguru Ninti - Knowing Country, Artkelch, Freiburg, Germany
- 2018 Convoking the Genesis - Eurantica - Aboriginal Signature Estrangin Gallery – Brussels
- 2018 Pila nguruku kapi walkatjara – Painted Waters of Spinifex Country, ARTKELCH at Skulpturenpark Wesenberg, Wesenberg, Germany
- 2017 Wüste - Meer - Schpfermythen ArtKelch Gallery presented at The Rautenstrauch-Joest Museum Cologne, Germany
- 2017 Spinifex Arts 20th Anniversary, Japingka Gallery, Fremantle. WA
- 2017 'Gems from the remote Deserts' Aboriginal Signature Estrangin Gallery, at the Parcours des Mondes, Paris
- 2017 Spinifex Ascendent Short Street Gallery, Broome, Western Australia
- 2017 Farben der Wüste, ARTKELCH at Teppichhaus Jordan, Waldshut-Tiengen, Germany
- 2016 Gems from the desert - Aboriginal Signature Estrangin Gallery, Brussels, Belgium
- 2016 Pila Nguratja - In Spinifex Country Vivien Anderson Gallery, Melbourne
- 2016 DesertMob Araluen Gallery, Alice Springs, N.T. (collaboration with Estelle Hogan, Ngalpingka Simms and Kanta Donnegan)
- 2016 Rawa Nyinanyi- Unbroken. Outstation Gallery, Darwin. N.T.
- 2016 Exposition Spinifex Arts Project, Aboriginal Signature Estrangin Fine Art, Belgium
- 2016 LORE The visual language of cultural Identity, Raft Artspace, Tasmania
- 2016 Tjungutja – Art of the Spinifex Collaborative, Redot Fine Art Gallery, Singapore



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- 2016 Purungu und Narrupa, ARTKELCH at KUNSTWERK, Eberdingen-Nussdorf, Germany
- 2016 Geisterstunde bei ARTKELCH, ARTKELCH, Freiburg, Germany
- 2015 Spinifex Arts Project 2015, Aboriginal and Pacific Arts, Sydney, N.S.W
- 2015 Tamaranthi - Festival of Contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide. SA.
- 2015 Wo das Stachelkopfgas wächst, ArtKelch, Freiberg, Germany
- 2015 Kulunypa- selected small works from the Spinifex Arts Project, Outstation Gallery, Darwin. N.T.
- 2015 Indigenous Australia enduring civilisation, The British Museum, London
- 2014 Spinifex Artists, Japingka Gallery, Fremantle W.A
- 2014 Tjuntjuntjara Nguratja- Tjuntjuntjara is home Harvey Art Projects, Sun Valley, Idaho, USA
- 2014 Tjuntjuntjara - recent works from Spinifex Country Shorts Street Gallery, Broome, Western Australia
- 2014 Spinifex Tjukurpa ReDot Gallery, Singapore
- 2014 Spinifex Arts Project 2014, Vivien Anderson Gallery, Melbourne, VIC
- 2014 Pila- Spinifex Land Outstation Gallery, Parap, Darwin. NT.
- 2014 DesertMob Araluen Gallery, Alice Springs, N.T. (collaboration with Estelle Hogan)
- 2014 Australian Contemporary Indigenous Art 111 Chiaroscuro Contemporary Art in association with Vivien Anderson Gallery, Santa Fe, USA
- 2014alleries. Stokes Hill Wharf, Darwin, N.T. Womens Collaborative
- 2013 Zeitreise, ARTKELCH, Freiburg, Germany
- 2013 Spinifex Arts Project, ARTKELCH at art Karlsruhe 2013, Karlsruhe, Germany
- 2013 A Lesson in Pitjantjatjara, ARTKELCH Collectors Lounge at kptec, Schomdorf, Germany
- 2013 Spinifex Arts Project ArtKelch, Freiburg, Munich, Hamburg, Bodensee, Lake Constance, Germany
- 2013 Kuwaritja - New Works of the Spinifex People Outstation Gallery, Darwin, Northern Territory
- 2012 Tupun Nguranguru – People of the Sandhill Country 45 Downstairs Gallery, Vivien Anderson, Melbourne
- 2012 Spinifex - People of the Sun and Shadow John Curtin Gallery, Curtin University, Perth, Western Australia
- 2010 Desert Country, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, SA. And national tour
- 2010 Australian Contemporary Indigenous Art Now, Chiaroscuro Gallery, Santa Fe USA in association with Vivien Anderson Gallery, Melbourne VIC (Womens Collaborative)



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- 2005 Law and Land Aboriginal Art Museum, Utrecht, The Netherlands
2002 Putitja Nguru - Art of the Spinifex People Japingka Gallery, Fremantle, W.A
2001 Flinders Arts Museum, Adelaide, S.A.
2001 Broken Hill City Regional Art Gallery, Broken Hill, N.S.W
2001 All About Art Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne, Vic.
2000 Pila Nguru - Art and Song of the Spinifex People Western Australian Museum, Perth, W.A and national tour

Bibliography

- 2002 Cane, S. Pila Nguru: The Spinifex People, Fremantle Arts Centre Press, Fremantle, WA
2008 McCulloch Childs, E. New Beginnings: Classic Paintings from the Corrigan Collection of 21st Century Aboriginal Art, McCulloch and McCulloch, Melbourne.
2009 Art Gallery of Western Australia 2009, Western Australian Indigenous Art Awards, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth WA
2010 Cumpston, N. 2010, Desert Country (exh. cat.), Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide SA
2012 Jorgensen, D.J. 2012, No Place Without Other Places: Spinifex Arts Project at fifteen years, ARTLINK: Australian contemporary art quarterly, 32, 2, pp. 86-87
2012 Rothwell, Nicolas. "Paintings of lifetimes in the desert" The Australian, August 6th 2012
2012 Hackett, J. Forrest, S. Malcolm, C. Cane, S. Carty, J. Lane, C. Cruthers, J. Chadwick, R. Allerton, L. Spinifex: People of the Sun and Shadow (exh. cat) John Curtin Gallery, Perth. W. A
2013 Jukurpa Diary 2014. IAD Press, Alice Springs, N.T. (Womens Collaborative)
2013 ARTKELCH, Robyn Kelch: Spinifex Arts Project, Exhibition catalogue Pro Community 2013, Freiburg, Germany
2015 Neill, Rosemary. 2015, British Museum indigenous exhibition earns royal approval, The Australian, May 2nd
2015 Sculthorpe, Gaye. 2015, Bringing great Australian Indigenous works of art into the light at the British Museum, The Financial Review, April 29th
2015 Reuters video, Prince Charles says Indigenous history as important as ANZAC day, Reuters, May 1st
2015 Sculthorpe, G. Carty, J. Morphy, H. Nugent, M. Coats, I. Bolton, L. Jones, J. Indigenous Australia enduring civilisation (exh cat) The British Museum, London, UK.
2015 Nicholls, Christine. 2015, Indigenous Australia: enduring civilisation is a



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- challenge to review, The Conversation, 27th April
- 2015 Edmons, Penny. 2015 Indigenous Australia exhibition at the British Museum is insider activism at its best, The Conversation, April 22nd
- 2015 Dulaney, Michael. Spinifex artwork takes pride of place at British Museum, The Kalgoorlie Miner, May 8th
- 2015 Kelch, Robyn: Pro Community Spinifex Arts Project 2013 in Munich, in: Journal Fünf Kontinente. Forum für ethnologische Forschung, Band 16, 2013/2014, p. 45ff, Munich, Germany
- 2015 Jones, Jonathon. 2015, Indigenous Australia: enduring civilisation a fabulous beast, The Gardian, April 21st
- 2017 ARTKELCH, Robyn Kelch: Wüste – Meer – Schöpfemythen, Exhibition catalogue, Freiburg, Germany
- 2018 ARTKELCH, Robyn Kelch: Spinifex Arts Project, Exhibition catalogue, Freiburg, Germany

Awards

- 2019 Finalist 36th Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award, Museums and Art Galleries, Darwin, N.T
- 2015 Finalist (Womens Collaborative) 32nd Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award, Museums and Art Galleries, Darwin, N.T

Collections

ARTBANK, AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT COLLECTION, AUSTRALIA
Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection of the University of Virginia, USA
MUSEUM FÜNF KONTINENTE, MUNICH, GERMANY
NATIONAL GALLERY OF VICTORIA, MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA
PARLIAMENT HOUSE ART COLLECTION, CANBERRA, ACT (Womens Collaborative)
THE ART GALLERY OF NEW SOUTH WALES, SYDNEY, NSW
THE ART GALLERY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA, ADELAIDE, S.A (WOMENS COLLABORATIVE)
THE BRITISH MUSEUM, LONDON, ENGLAND.(WOMENS COLLABORATIVE)
THE CORRIGAN COLLECTION, AUSTRALIA. (WOMENS COLLABORATIVE)
W. & V. MCGEOCH COLLECTION, MELBOURNE, VIC