

Short St. Gallery

Fate Savari (Isawdi)

Birth c.1933 - 2019
Language Ömie
Region Oro Province, Papua New Guinea



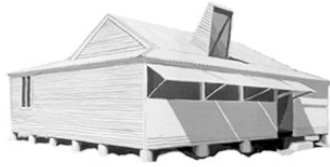
Biography

"When I was young I used to live with my mother at old Sidonejo village near the volcano, Huvaimo. I always stayed with her learning to mix red, yellow and black coloured pigments and I learnt where to find everything I need to make barkcloth in the forest. Our ancestors were living in the bush and when I was a small girl I saw Bamu Tenny start to build the town [Popondetta] with sago leaf rooves. At that time there was no school and no airport. Now as an old woman, I paint my barkcloth designs to show the world I am still here, living and painting at Gora village so that my memory will live on, otherwise our Ömie culture will be lost."

Fate Savari (Isawdi) has been painting for Ömie Artists since the Gora village art centre was established by the community in late 2008, officially opening in 2009. She was undisputedly the most knowledgeable artist and (humble) female cultural leader in all of Ömie territory as she has been painting her entire life, since she was a very young girl.

Her mother was Majaho and her father was the legendary Lokirro, both Dahorurajé clanspeople from Sidonejo village. The old village of Sidonejo was destroyed during the 1951 eruption of Huvaimo (Mount Lamington) and the village was relocated to present day Savodobei. Both Sidonejo and Savodobei are highly significant villages as they are nestled high in the mountains close to the sacred mountains frequently referred to in the Ömie creation story—Huvaimo (Mount Lamington), where the world began; and Mount Obo, home of the first people, Mina and Suja.

Fate learnt a wealth of soru'e (tattoo designs) from her mother. In splendid detail, she paints her knowledge of—the sacred Ömie creation story; ancestral stories; stories linked to sacred sites and sites of significance; ancient nioge (barkcloth) designs; microcosmic and phenomenological details and observations of the tropical landscape; and Ömie histories. Through the complexity, sophistication and extraordinary diversity of her designs, Fate's paintings take us to the source - to the very heart of the world of Ömie. With each new painting Fate reveals new ancestral knowledge and prides herself on executing that knowledge in the most visually compelling way possible. She is a true artist of the highest order.



Short St. Gallery

She is the widow of Evorajé clanman Fall Savari and moved from her village of Savodobehe to his village in the Gora valley when they married. Fall taught Fate the ancestral stories of his land in the Gora valley. Fate has taught many of her designs to her daughter, Hilda Mekio, as well as her daughter-in-law, Linda-Grace Savari. Isawdi is the proud mother of seven children.

Fate tells a vivid account of her time during the Second World War. This was one of her first encounters with 'outsiders': *"I was in the house with my family at Sidonejo when we first heard the warplane flying over. When we went outside and saw the plane my parents gathered up my family and we ran as quickly as we could towards our new yam garden and hid ourselves in the bush under a tree."*

Solo Exhibitions

- 2022 The Secret Language of Mountains: The Art of Isawdi, Delmar Gallery, Sydney, Australia
2021 The Art of Isawdi (Fate Savari), ReDot Fine Art Gallery, Sydney, Australia

Group Exhibitions

- 2022 [upcoming] Aboriginal Signature - Estrangin Fine Art Gallery, Brussels, Belgium
2021 Sydney Oceanic Arts Fair (SOAF), National Art School, Sydney, Australia
2020 Where Clouds Are Spirit Parrots: Art of the Ömie Women, Delmar Gallery, Sydney, Australia
2019 Oceanic Art Society Tribal Art Fair, National Art School, Sydney, Australia
2019 Niugini: Land of the Unexpected I, ArtKelch, Freiburg, Germany
2018 Oceanic Art Society Tribal Art Fair, National Art School, Sydney, Australia
2018 Ömie Barkcloth Art - Papua New Guinea, Japingka Aboriginal Art, Perth, Australia
2018 Art of the Ömie, JGM Gallery, London, UK
2017 Ömie Barkcloth Art of Papua New Guinea, Aboriginal & Pacific Art, Sydney, Australia
2017 Nom'e Javavamu Darugé l'jové (We Dance Our Designs To Life), ReDot Fine Art Gallery, Singapore
2017 PNG, It's Dynamite, Andrew Baker Art Dealer, Brisbane, Australia
2017 Ömie Women Artists, Tunbridge Gallery, Perth, Australia
2017 Stories Art Forever, presented by Vivien Anderson Gallery at Merricks House Gallery, Mornington Peninsula, Victoria, Australia
2016 Mionomehi Oriseegé (Ancestral Paths), Short Street Gallery, Broome, Australia
2016 Moonlight, Mountains and Pig Tusks: Painted Wisdom of the Ömie Chiefs, Vivien Anderson Gallery, Melbourne, Australia
2015 Hijominöe Modéjadé (Guided by Ancestors): Ömie Artists 10th Anniversary Exhibition, Andrew Baker Art Dealer, Brisbane, Australia



Short St. Gallery

- 2015 Shifting Patterns: Pacific Barkcloth Painting, British Museum, London, United Kingdom
- 2015 Mein Freund Der Baum (My Friend, The Tree), ArtKelch, Schorndorf, Germany
- 2015 Duvahe Nioge: Barkcloths by the Senior Ömie Artists of Papua New Guinea, Vivien Anderson Gallery, Melbourne, Australia
- 2015 Under the Volcano: Art of Ömie from Papua New Guinea, Museum Fünf Kontinente, Munich, Germany
- 2015 Art Karlsruhe 2015 (Ömie Artists presented by ArtKelch), Karlsruhe, Germany
- 2014 Luminous Mountain, Andrew Baker Art Dealer, Brisbane, Australia
- 2014 Das soll Kunst sein Vol. 12 (Ömie Artists presented by ArtKelch), Kunstverein, Freiburg, Germany
- 2014 Ömie Artists: Contemporary Tapa Art from Papua New Guinea, ArtKelch, Freiburg & Stuttgart, Germany
- 2014 New Paintings by Ömie Chiefs and Senior Artists, Aboriginal & Pacific Art, Sydney, Australia
- 2013 Made in Oceania: Tapa – Art and Social Landscapes, Rautenstrauch-Joest Museum, Cologne, Germany
- 2013 Volcanic Visions: Barkcloth Art of the Ömie, Cavin-Morris Gallery, New York, USA
- 2013 Suja's Daughters, Andrew Baker Art Dealer, Brisbane, Australia
- 2013 Of Spirit and Splendour: Barkcloth Art of the Ömie, ReDot Fine Art Gallery, Singapore
- 2012 Art of the Ömie: Barkcloth Paintings from Papua New Guinea, Harvey Art Projects, Sun Valley, Idaho, USA
- 2012 Second Skins: Painted Barkcloth from New Guinea and Central Africa, Fowler Museum at UCLA, Los Angeles, USA
- 2012 Barkcloth Paintings by Ömie Chiefs and Elders, William Mora Galleries, Melbourne, Australia
- 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, Australia

Bibliography

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

Baker, Andrew, PNG, It's Dynamite [exhibition catalogue], Andrew Baker Art Dealer, Brisbane, 2017



Short St. Gallery

Child, Charlie; Guerrini-Maraldi, Jennifer, Art of the Ömie [exhibition catalogue], JGM Gallery, London, 2018

Kelch, Robyn; and King, Brennan, Niugini - Land of the Unexpected I, ArtKelch, Freiburg, Germany ArtKelch, Freiburg, 2019

King, Brennan, Hijominöe Modéjadé (Guided by Ancestors): Ömie Artists 10th Anniversary Exhibition [exhibition catalogue], Andrew Baker Art Dealer, Brisbane, 2015

King, Brennan. and Pilla, Giorgio, The Art of Isawdi (Fate Savari), [digital exhibition catalogue], ReDot Fine Art Gallery, Singapore, 2021

Modjeska, Drusilla, Suja's Daughters [exhibition catalogue], Andrew Baker Art Dealer, 2013

Luminous Mountain [exhibition catalogue], Andrew Baker Art Dealer, 2014

Collections

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia

Museum Victoria, Melbourne, Australia

Fowler Museum at UCLA, Los Angeles, USA

British Museum, London, UK

Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge, UK

Michelle Picker Collection, Melbourne

Private Collections