

Short St. Gallery

Mildred Minggu Mungulu

Born 1957
Region West Kimberley
Language Worrora, Wunambal



Biography

Mildred was born at Derby in the old Native Hospital (Numbala Nunga) and spent her 22 years at Mowanjum ("old site") on the Derby Highway. This was where Mildred watched her father Alan Mungulu (dec) make didgeridoos and boomerangs at home. *"When I was there I would see him do them."* It was being near the traditional crafting of these objects that created a connection to the traditional culture which assisted Mildred's own craft as a painter.

In 1979 the community was moved to a new site on the Gibb River Road and this is where Mildred now resides. Mildred started her career as an exhibiting artist in 1998 and belongs to one of the most established traditional families in Mowanjum.

Mildred has exhibited in Sydney, Perth, Derby, Broome and Woodford, Queensland. As the family grew up Mildred's sisters, Sandra, Marjorie, Margaret and Robyn, also developed into painters with the artistic dynasty led by "mum", Gudu Mungulu, a significant Mowanjum painter in her own right.

Mildred paints, *"what represents us, from our mothers and fathers. We keep it going from genera on to generation."* Mildred's paintings demonstrate an array of traditional symbolic representations, including Wandjinas from the three tribes of the Mowanjum community: the Ngarinyin, Worrora and Wanambul tribes. Coastal Wandjina are signified by the series of circular lines crossed with radial lines fanning from the Wandjina's head. It has been said this represents a cyclone and lightning.

Other Wandjinas are surrounded by animals made sacred by the Wandjina and the snake that gives childless couples hope. The owl (dumbi) is the wise councillor to the Wandjina and the Gyorn Gyorn are shown gathering food and dancing at ceremonies for the Wandjinas.

Mildred advises: *"Gyorn gyorn are like food gatherers and help Wandjinas with things. Ungud (waterhole) help couples who can't have kids. In the pool of water the couple go swimming and get pregnant. Fishes are from the caves (Bradshaw caves). You know like in the books. Turtles, they get Wandjinas in them too. The two birds have two skins, Wodoi and Jungun. All the same skin, can't marry. Skins in the Mowanjum community can marry if skin is different."*



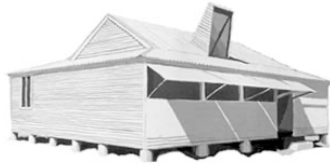
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Some female forms are described by Mildred as "*Jilinya- she likes stealing men. When men go in the bush and are gone, it's her.*"

Mildred spent many years working at Kimberley Health and has a partially completed qualification in Community Health undertaken at Curtin University.

Group Exhibitions

- 2017 Derby Christmas Markets
- 2017 Sydney Opera House Sydney Homeground Markets
- 2017 Tarnanthi Art Fair (Adelaide, South Australia)
- 2017 Darwin Art Fair
- 2017 Emerging Aboriginal Western Australian Artists (Fremantle Gallery - Perth)
Revealed
- 2009 Sharing Difference on Common Ground – Holmes a Court Gallery & touring nationally
- 2009 Mowanjum Festival – Mowanjum Art and Culture Centre, Derby
- 2008 Shinju Matsuri Wandjina Budda Budding – Broome 6 Gallery
- 2008 Mowanjum Festival – Mowanjum Art Centre
- 2008 Cultural Connections - Arittja Art Gallery Perth
- 2008 Spirit of the Wandjina - Shinju Matsuri Exhibition Broome 6 Gallery
- 2007 Mowanjum Festival - Mowanjum Art and Culture Centre, Derby
- 2007 Arralululai - Broome 6 Gallery 2007 Mowanjum Exhibition - Woodford
Dreaming Festival, QLD
- 2006 Spirit of the Wandjina - Governor Stirling Tower, Perth
- 2006 Power of the Wandjina - Macquarie University Sydney
- 2005 Spirit of the Wandjina - Broome 6 Gallery 2005 Keeping the Wandjinas Fresh -
Exhibition and book launch - Alexander Library Perth
- 2005 Mowanjum Festival - Mowanjum Community
- 2005 Mowanjum Exhibition - Festival of the Dreaming Woodford, QLD
- 2004 Mowanjum Exhibition - Sydney Dreaming Festival
- 2004 Mowanjum Festival - Mowanjum Community
- 2003 Mowanjum Festival - Mowanjum Community
- 2003 Spirit of the Wandjina - Harvey Bay QLD
- 2002 Visions from the Cave - Sun Picture Theatre, Broome
- 2002 Mowanjum Festival - Mowanjum Community
- 2001 Recent Works - Melbourne Spirit of the Wandjina Gallery
- 2001 Mowanjum Festival - Mowanjum Community
- 2000 The Art of the Wandjina - Sydney Olympics Exhibition, NSW
- 2000 Spirit of the Wandjina - Compass Travel Postonja Slovenia
- 2000 Mowanjum Festival - Mowanjum Community
- 2000 Spirit of the Wandjina Exhibition – Melbourne



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- 1999 Power of the Wandjina - Telstra National Headquarters – Melbourne
- 1999 Recent Works - Spirit of the Wandjina Gallery, Melbourne
- 1999 Power of the Wandjina - Governor Stirling Tower, Perth
- 1999 Spirit of the Wandjina Exhibition - Governor Place, Sydney
- 1999 Mowanjum Festival - Mowanjum Community
- 1998 Spirit of the Wandjina - Telstra National Headquarters, Melbourne
- 1998 Mowanjum Festival - Mowanjum Community
- 1998 Mowanjum Wandjina Art – Matzo's Broome
- 1998 Spirit of the Wandjina – Grosvenor Place, Sydney
- 1997 Mowanjum Festival - Mowanjum Community

Commissions

- 2000 Sydney Olympics Opening Ceremony – Large Scale Sculpture