Short St. Gallery

GUDU MUNGULU



Born c1936 - 2025
Language Group Worora/Ngaryinyin
Region West Kimberley

BIOGRAPHY

Gudu is the warm and generous Mungulu matriarch. Born in Pantijan, she trekked to Munja, Kunmunya, Wotjulum, old Mowanjum and present day Mowanjum. She is a traditional, highly respected elder who teaches language and tells stories to the students at Derby District High School, and cares for a large extended family.
Her daughters Margaret, Marjorie, Mildred, Sandra, Robyn and Jacqui, and her granddaughters Carmen and Deidre, are all artists. Gudu's husband Alan (deceased) was a Worora leader. He taught young children in the Wotjulum and Mowanjum mission schools and was known for his pearl shell carvings. Together, they ran the mission store for many years.
Gudu Mungula commenced painting at Mowanjum in 1998. Gudu specialises in painting bush tucker, including Waanunga (bush honey). Her work is keenly sought for its authenticity and strong design. She is a prolific artist and continues to inspire her family with stories from her traditional culture. "My grandchildren ask me about the Wandjina, about the rules. They know about it. I tell them. Callum, my grandson, he learns to paint but he doesn't get the meaning. You need to tell them. A lot of kids ask questions when they start painting. Callum asks, 'What colour do I have to use?' I say you use white there. He helps other kids at school who want to know, telling them the stories. They also want to know about the past." As a child, Gudu lived at the Kunmunya, lnear Camden Sound in the centre of the Worrorro

lands. People from this location were encouraged to visit the Wandjina painting sites, to hunt kangaroo and sea life, and to speak their languages. In the 1950's, Gudu moved to Wotjulum where the groups from Munja and Kummunya were combined to create a new Presbyterian Mission before moving to Derby. The new community in Derby was called Mowanjum, which means 'settled at last'. However, another move would be imposed on the community to the current Mowanjum site. It was through this experience that Gudu started to talk to the older people about the Wandjina and paint her father's language of the Wandjina from the old site (the caves). Wandjina from the coastal area is different to Ngarinyin and Wumumbul people. "Wandjina was for the tribe, stories and beliefs. It must look the same as the first Wandjinas, white and red ochre. The background could be different, but it must look the same as how it was painted in caves. Wandjina represents the whole people, creator, for everything, food and land. It was given by him. I was picturing it like a god, the head of other Wandjinas." "I like doing painting. I have a feeling of it, something important. I like to keep the feeling up. I tell my kids about the feeling." "I paint my own Wandjina stories like painting the honey bee. I got permission from the older people, owners of those things. The honey bee should be black but I put maybe yellow on the back. Story is plain black but I add colour. Nobody told me. I did it on my own to do something to make it standout." In the near future, one of Gudu's honey bee pieces will be displayed at the Perth Internatinal Airport. Gudu works with, and shares her knowledge with, all the other artists and children in the Mowanjum community, at the art centre. Gudu says "We all share. They all know their own painting. I can't do their Wandjinas. All people do their own." Gudu's artwork has been exhibited internationally and numerous times nationally, this includes the display of her work at the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. Gudu is a regular exhibitor at the Mowanjum Festival and, along with her daughters, Gudu continues to sustain art practices in Mowanjum.

GROUP EXHIBTIONS

2017 Sydney Opera House Sydney Homeground Markets

2017 paintings Darwin Art Fair

2017 Emerging Aboriginal Western Australian Artists (Fremantle Gallery - Perth) Revealed

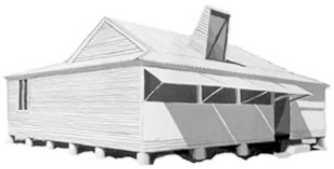
2016 Darwin Art Fair

2016 Kimberley Art Prize

2016 Mowanjum Festival

2015 Darwin Art Fair

2015 Kimberley Art Prize



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2015 Mowanjum Festival

2014 Freshwater Cove, Wandjina Tours, Darwin Art Fair

2013 Freshwater Cove, Wandjina Tours, Darwin Art Fair

2012 Darwin Art Fair

2011 Artmarket Perth part of the Commonwealth Festival

2010 Japingka Gallery Fremantle, Mowanjum Artist new works in ochre

2009 Mowanjum Festival – Mowanjum Art and Culture Centre, Derby

2008 Shinju Matsuri Wandjina Budda Budding – Broome 6 Gallery

2008 Mowanjum Festival – Mowanjum Art and Culture Centre Kimberley Art Prize - Derby W.A

2008 Cultural Connections - Artitja Art Gallery Perth

2008 Spirit of the Wandjina - Shinju Matsuri Exhibi on Broome 6 Gallery

2007 Mowanjum Festival - Mowanjum Art and Culture Centre, Derby

2007 Arralululai - Broome 6 Gallery 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

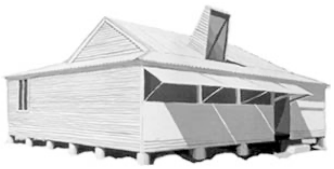
2005 Keeping the Wandjinas Fresh - Exhibition and book launch - Alexander Library Perth

2005 Mowanjum Festival Mowanjum Exhibition - Festival of the Dreaming Woodford, QLD

2004 Mowanjum Exhibition - Sydney Dreaming Festival

2004 Mowanjum Festival

2003 Mowanjum Festival



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2003 Spirit of the Wandjina - Harvey Bay QLD

2002 Visions from the Cave - Sun Picture Theatre, Broome

2002 Mowanjum Festival Recent Works - Melbourne

2000 Spirit of the Wandjina Gallery

2000 Mowanjum Festival

2000 The Art of the Wandjina - Sydney Olympics Exhibition, NSW

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

1998 Spirit of the Wandjina -Telstra National Headquarters, Melbourne

1998 Mowanjum Festival

1998 Mowanjum Wandjina Art – Matzo's Broome 1

998 Spirit of the Wandjina – Grosvenor Place, Sydney

1997 Mowanjum Festival

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