

Short St. Gallery

Nancy Nyanjilpayi (Ngarnjapayi) Chapman

Birth Year 1941
Language Group Manyjilyjarra
Region Punmu: WA



Biography

"When I was little, I used to stand up all the time, looking for the old people to come back bringing food. The old people gave me that name, Nyanjilpayi ['standing up']."

- Nyanjilpayi (Ngarnjapayi) Nancy Chapman

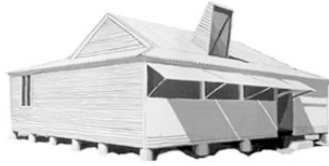
"When I was born my spirit appeared at Jarntinti. That's my Country, Jarntinti. I know all about it, about that water over there, about my home, our grandparent's Country. We travelled all around as pujiman, camping and then setting off again by foot. We didn't get tired. We just kept on going. Sometimes it would rain, so we would build a shelter, just like a tent. Inside we would light a fire. Our pujiman lifestyle was very healthy and we didn't get sick very often. Even when it was cold we continued to walk around in good health.

I'm working on my painting of those waterholes, I was drinking from them long ago as a pujiman. My family's water, my grandmother's, my grandfathers and my ancestors. I was taught from them. Our knowledge is ancient and has been passed on by our grandparents. Young people need to keep looking after it."

- Nyanjilpayi Nancy Chapman as translated by Kanyiminpa Jukurpa

Nyanjilpayi is a Manyjilyjarra woman, born in the 1940s at Jarntinti, a large claypan at the southern end of Nyayartakujarra (Lake Dora) and within the Karlamilyi (Rudall River) region. She is the sister of fellow senior Martumili Artists Mulyatingki Marney, Mayiwalku Chapman and Marjorie Yates (dec.). As children, Nyanjilpayi and her family walked around the Punmu, Kunawarritji (Canning Stock Route Well 33) and Karlamilyi regions. A severe and prolonged drought extended through many years during this formative period in her life, and Nyanjilpayi remembers this as a difficult time. Although her family knew about the mission at Jigalong, where a supply of rationed food and water was assured, they chose to continue to live nomadically and independently for many years.

Both of Nyanjilpayi's parents passed away when she and her siblings were still very young, leaving them to survive by themselves in the desert. For a time the sisters travelled alone,



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occasionally meeting and travelling with other people and family groups that cared for them, including renowned artists Eubena Nampitjin (dec.) and Nora Nungabar (Nyangapa) (dec.).

Finally Nyanjilpayi and her sisters decided to walk to Balfour Downs, where they were collected by Jigalong Mission staff. At Jigalong Nyanjilpayi met her husband Minyawwe Miller. From there the couple lived and worked together on several cattle stations throughout the Pilbara, and mined for minerals with a *yandy* (winnowing dish) whilst raising their children. As a family they relocated to Punmu Aboriginal community as foundational members during the 'Return to Country' movement of the 1980's, where they lived for many years before moving between Newman and Port Hedland in more recent times.

Nyanjilpayi is one of Martumili's pioneering artists. She is known for her energetic, diverse, and experimental approach to painting, and has developed a range of unique and technically sophisticated styles. Nyanjilpayi's artworks depict her *ngurra* (home Country, camp), the Country she walked as a young woman; its animals, plants, waterholes and associated Jukurpa (Dreaming) narratives. Her work has been exhibited widely across Australia and internationally, and acquired by the National Museum of Australia.

Group Exhibitions

2021	Martumili Mob, The Courthouse Gallery, Port Hedland, WA
2021	Warralong, Yaama Ganu Gallery, Moree, NSW
2021	Paper Wangka (Paper Story), Martumili Gallery, Newman, WA
2020	Contemporary Desert Art, Dellasposa, London, UK
2019	Paru [Spinifex], Artitja Fine Art Gallery, Perth, WA
2019	Salon Des Refuses 2019, Darwin, NT
2019	Nyumma (burnt Country), Paul Johnstone Gallery, Darwin, NT
2018	Hedland Art Award, The Courthouse Gallery, Port Hedland, WA
2018	Desert Mob 2019, Araluen Art Centre, Alice Springs, NT
2018	Warla Tuwa, Aboriginal Contemporary, Bronte, NSW
2018	Martuku Ninti (Martu Knowledge), Vivien Anderson Gallery, Melbourne, VIC
2018	Pujiman, Martumili Artists and Spinifex Hill Artists, Port Hedland Courthouse Gallery, WA
2017	Songlines: Tracking the Seven Sisters, touring exhibition from National Museum of Australia, Canberra, ACT
2017	Desert Mob, Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs, NT
2017	After The Rains, Martumili Gallery, Newman, WA
2016	Desert Mob, Araluen Art Centre, Alice Springs, NT
2015	Pukurlpa - Good Inside, Yaama Ganu Gallery, Moree, NSW
2015	The Summer Collectors Show 2015, McCulloch & McCulloch Gallery, Mornington Peninsula, VIC



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- 2014 Malya Yuturringu; be a star, State Theatre Centre, Perth, WA
- 2013 Desert Mob, Araluen Art Centre, Alice Springs, NT
- 2013 Martumili Art Show, Newman Visitors Centre, Newman, WA
- 2013 Painting It Martu Way, Art Mob, Hobart, TAS
- 2012 We Don't Need A Map: a Martu experience of the Western Desert, Araluen Centre, Alice Springs, NT
- 2012 Martumili Artists 2012, Merenda Gallery, Perth, WA
- 2012 Desert Mob, Araluen Centre, Alice Springs, NT
- 2012 Warla: an explanation of the salt lakes in the Great Sandy Desert, Short Street Gallery, Broome, WA
- 2012 Martumili Artists at Art Mob, Art Mob, Hobart, TAS
- 2011 Revealed – Emerging Aboriginal Artists from Western Australia, Gallery Central, Perth, WA
- 2011 Yiwarra Kuju – One Road, One People, Australian Museum, Sydney, NSW
- 2011 Waru! Holding Fire in Australia's Western Desert, Thomas Welton Stanford Art Gallery, Stanford University, San Francisco, USA
- 2011 Yiwarra Kuju – One Road, One People, Perth Convention Exhibition Centre, Perth, WA
- 2011 Desert Mob, Araluen Centre, Alice Springs, NT
- 2011 Living Water – Contemporary Art of the Far Western Desert, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, VIC
- 2010 Jakulpa laju kartyinpa (Bringing a message), Chapman Gallery, Canberra, ACT
- 2010 Yiwarra Kuju – One Road, One People, National Museum of Australia, Canberra, ACT
- 2010 Before and After Science, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide Biennial 2010, SA
- 2010 Martumili Group Exhibition, Redot Art Gallery, Singapore
- 2009 Warranpalampaju kayili yaninpa (Our Country travelling north), Raft Art Space, Darwin, NT
- 2009 Yankuni laju karnkani kujungka (We are travelling together by air), Red Dot Gallery, Singapore
- 2009 Wangka-Lampaju (Our Story), Randell Lane Gallery, Perth, WA
- 2009 Nintijunu (Teaching), Aboriginal & Pacific Art, Sydney, NSW
- 2009 Puntu kumu (Belongs to the people), Newman Visitors Centre, Newman, WA
- 2008 Martumili Artists, Port Hedland Courthouse Arts Centre and Gallery, Port Hedland, WA
- 2008 Martumili Artists Recent Works, William Mora Galleries, Melbourne, VIC
- 2008 Jitirangu (Rainbow), Randell Lane Gallery, Perth, WA



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2008 Laltu tujuparaku, yulpalpa yimnaparaku (Lots of women, little bit men),
Aboriginal and Pacific Art, Sydney, NSW
2007 Martu-la wakamu kuwarri wiyaju, William Mora Galleries, Melbourne, VIC

Collections

Art Gallery of Western Australia
National Museum of Australia

Awards

2018 Kathy Donnelly Award, Hedland Art Awards