

TJORITJORINJA

ILTJA NTJARRA MANY HANDS ART CENTRE

25 March - 21 May 2023

Words by Marisa Maher

We are excited to be exhibiting at Ngununggula, Southern Highlands Regional Gallery where we'll have the privilege of showcasing our new works on beautiful Gundungurra Country. An expression and reflection of country, the works depict Tjoritja (pronounced Choor-it-ja) – West MacDonnell Ranges country that stretches for 161 kilometres west of Mparntwe (Alice Springs).

This project involved both senior and emerging artists based in Mparntwe and Ntaria Community (Hermannsburg) 120km west of Mparntwe.

20 current Itja Ntjarra (Many Hands) artists worked hard to present a unique and innovative body of work including, works on paper, watercolour on repurposed road signs, silk, and wooden artefacts. Established and mid-career artists Vanessa Inkamala, Hubert Pareroultja, Mervyn Rubuntja, Selma Coulthard, Ivy Pareroultja, Betty Namatjira Wheeler, Marcus Wheeler, Stanley Ebatarinja, Kathy Inkamala, Reinhold Inkamala and Benita Clements worked alongside, and supported, new and emerging artists Mandy Malbunka, Dellina Inkamala, Dianne Inkamala, Delray Inkamala, Bronwyn Lankin, Tina Malbunka, Kathleen France, Ada Lechleitner and Russell Inkamala.

All artists working here at the Itja Ntjarra Art Centre are continuing to paint in the Hermannsburg School tradition established by their grandfather and relative, Albert Namatjira. Everyone here is family. Artists are connected through their Dreamings, their ancestors' bloodline and by learning to paint in the Hermannsburg School style passed down through the generations, taught by the senior elders painting in the early years of the watercolour movement. By carrying on his legacy our artists are sustaining an important piece of living history. The works made for this exhibition are an expression of these multi-layered connections.





The exhibition title refers to how artists connect and belong to country and ultimately each other. This notion is expressed through traditional naming systems. Our people have traditional names and a kinship system, many of our people had tribal names, which connected them to their country. The significant sites that are inspiration for our artists' work are the conceptional sites of their family name and where they belong. In a similar way that non-Indigenous peoples' surnames might refer to the profession of their forefathers, for example Smith referring to blacksmiths, our surnames refer to our forefather's connection to country and place.

A series of powerful repurposed road signs speak to the way country is named and boundaries have been drawn since colonisation. Brother and sister Reinhold and Vanessa Inkamala have painted on large square signs, reclaiming these road markers back to country. Vanessa also worked with her sisters, Delray, and Dianne Inkamala to depict the way the environment has been changed by tourism and the arrival of missionaries. Other significant road sign works have been created by Kathleen France, Mandy Malbunka, Selma Coulthard, Ada Lechleitner, Kathy Inkamala, Dellina Inkamala and Mervyn Rubuntja.

In contrast a series of suspended silk panels work with light and transparency to tell stories from the artists' childhood. Treasured and happy memories of childhoods spent on country are depicted alongside darker stories about time spent off country negatively influenced by alcohol. Selma Coulthard's silk panels recalls her childhood at Tempe Downs, incorporating text, the work depicts six vivid scenes.

One of the bodies of work presented in the exhibition are a series of painted wooden artefacts. Carved in Mulga and Beanwood by Wayne Armstrong, Granville Inkamala, Fabian Raggett, Dean Inkamala and Brandon Presley, these objects reference Namatjira's early history of artefact making. In the same way that in the 1930s Namatjira engaged other men to cut and shape artefacts on which he then painted, the Itja Ntjarra (Many Hands) artists have worked with men from Ntaria (Hermannsburg) to carve on wooden artefacts on which they then painted their stories. Boomerangs, shields, spears, and clap sticks are featured, supporting men to collect and make work on their own country.



Also included in the exhibition are 20 watercolour paintings on paper mostly by established artists. For our artists watercolour on paper is the foundational practice from which new and experimental works develop and extend from. On show alongside the works of living Iltja Ntjarra artists are three paintings by Namatjira on loan from the National Gallery of Australia. Painted by Namatjira between 1948 and 1955, they depict three significant sites in Tjoritja (West MacDonnell Ranges). Contemporary artists have responded to these historical works, asserting their own connections.

Tjoritjarinja – Belonging to the West MacDonnell Ranges represents Iltja Ntjarra artists' ongoing and unfolding connections to each other through Dreaming, bloodline, kinship, and the heritage of the Hermannsburg School.

Thanks first and foremost to the Iltja Ntjarra (Many Hands) artists. Thanks also to Georges Bureau (Studio Coordinator), Klinton Buzzacott (Artworker) and Koren Wheatley (Project and engagement officer), Megan Monte and Milena Stojanovska for their contribution in realising this important project.

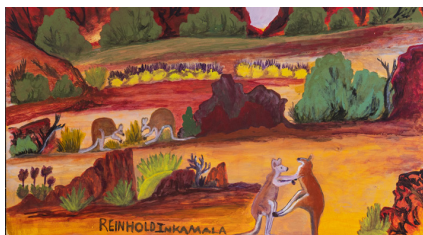
This project has been supported through the Australian Government's Indigenous Languages and Arts program.

For sales enquiries please contact:
art@manyhands.com.au



NGUNUNGULA

Retford Park
Southern Highlands
Regional Gallery



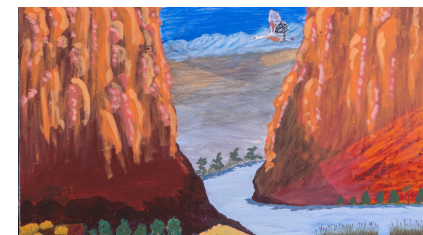
Reinhold Inkamala
Boxing arras/kangaroos (detail)
2022
Acrylic on repurposed road sign
101x101cm
\$2800



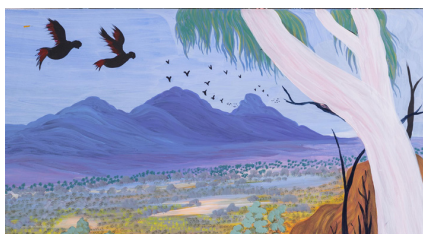
Reinhold Inkamala
Two black cockatoos flying over Rutjipma, NT (detail)
2022
Acrylic on repurposed road sign
109x109cm
SOLD



Vanessa Inkamala and Delray Inkamala
Ljalkaindirma (Mt Hermannsburg), NT (detail)
2022
Acrylic on repurposed road sign
101x101cm
\$2800



Dianne Inkamala
Yaparipa (Glen Helen) NT (detail)
2022
Acrylic on repurposed road sign
109x109cm
\$2400



Vanessa Inkamala
Tjoritja (West MacDonnel Ranges), NT (detail)
2022
Acrylic on repurposed road sign
101x101cm
SOLD



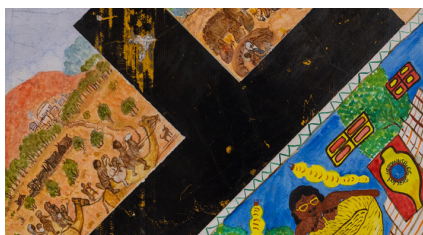
Dellina Inamala
Phone Picture of Rutjipma (Mt Sonder), NT (detail)
2022
Acrylic on repurposed road sign
90x60cm
SOLD



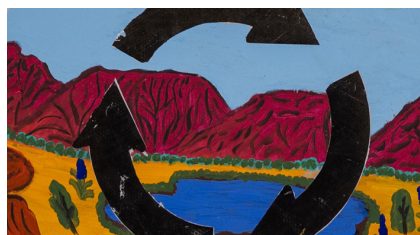
Kathleen France
Tjoritja (West MacDonnel Ranges), NT (detail)
2022
Acrylic on repurposed road sign
90x25x3cm
\$900



Ada Lechleitner
Tjoritja (West MacDonnel Ranges), NT (detail)
2022
Acrylic on repurposed road sign
30x90cm
\$800



Selma Coulthard and Many Malbunka
Three ways - Rubuntja. Coulthard and Malbunka (detail)
2022
Acrylic on repurposed road sign
75x75cm
\$2800



Kathleen France and Ada Lechleitner
Tjoritja with black cockatoo (detail)
2022
Acrylic on repurposed road sign
100x87cm
\$900



Kathy Inkamala
Kwartatuma (Orminston Gorge), NT (detail)
2022
Acrylic on repurposed road sign
75x75cm
\$2800



Mandy Malbunka
Tjoritja (West MacDonnel Ranges), NT (detail)
2022
Acrylic on repurposed road sign
60x45cm
\$1200

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Mervyn Rubuntja
Yaparipa (Glen Helen), NT (detail)
2022
Alkurta (Shield), watercolour pigment on Bean tree wood
47x17.5x6cm
\$2100



Stanley Ebatarinja
Illum Baura (Haasts Bluff), NT (detail)
2022
Watercolour pigment on Bean tree wood
18x50cm
\$2500



Betty Namatjira Wheeler
Tjoritja (West MacDonnel Ranges), NT (detail)
2022
Taarna (coolamon), watercolour pigment on Bean tree wood
40x16cm
\$1000



Marcus Wheeler
Back of Areyonga, NT (detail)
2022
Watercolour pigment on Mulga wood boomerang
86x7x1.5cm
\$1200



Hubert Pareroultja
Grass Trees near Thoralra (Gosses Bluff), NT (detail)
2022
Hunting boomerang, watercolour pigment on Mulga wood
86x10x2cm
\$2000



Marcus Wheeler
Two Emus, Tjoritja (West MacDonnel Ranges), NT (detail)
2022
Hunting boomerang, watercolour pigment on Mulga wood
68x8x2cm
\$1200



Marcus Wheeler
Tjoritja (West MacDonnel Ranges), NT (detail)
2022
Hunting boomerang, watercolour pigment on Mulga wood
62x5.5x1.5cm
\$1200



Hubert Pareroultja
Tjoritja (West MacDonnel Ranges), NT (detail)
2022
Watercolour pigment on Mulga wood boomerang
86x10x2cm
\$2300



Hubert Pareroultja
Palm Valley/Standley Chasm, NT (detail)
2022
Meeta (shield), watercolour pigment on Bean tree wood
74x14x8cm
\$3900



Russell Inkamala
Tjoritja (West MacDonnel Ranges), NT (detail)
2022
Watercolour pigment on aluminum can
12x6.5x6.5cm
\$200



Mervyn Rubuntja
Mangarraka/Mt Gillen, NT (detail)
2022
Meeta (shield), watercolour pigment on Bean tree wood
85x9.5x8cm
\$2900



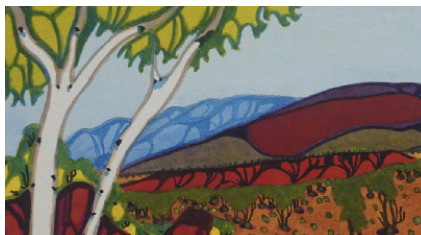
Marcus Wheller
Tjoritja (West MacDonnel Ranges), NT (detail)
2022
Punishment spear, watercolour pigment on Mulga wood
132x3.5x3.5cm
\$800

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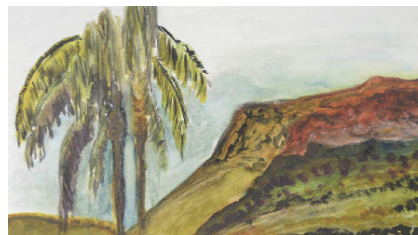
Retford Park
Southern Highlands
Regional Gallery



Russell Inkamala
Punishment Spear
2022
Carved Mulga wood
135x3cm
\$400



Mervyn Rubuntja
Tjoritja (West MacDonnel Ranges), NT (detail)
2022
Watercolours on paper
24x73cm
\$1480 (framed)



Reinhold Inkamala
Rutjipma (Mt Sonder), NT (detail)
2022
Watercolours on paper
35x35cm
SOLD



Selma Coulthard
Yaparipa (Glen Helen), NT
2022
Watercolours on paper
24x34cm
\$570 (framed)



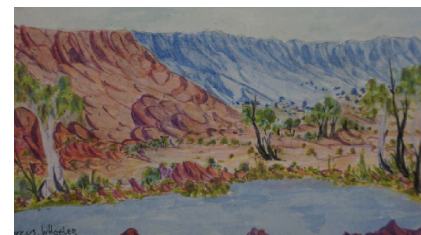
Betty Namatjira Wheeler
Tjoritja (West MacDonnel Ranges), NT (detail)
2022
Tururra (music sticks), watercolour pigment on Mulga wood
25x3x3cm
\$250 each



Selma Coulthard
Kupriya Sacred Rubbing Stone, NT (detail)
2022
Watercolours on paper
33x51cm
\$1020 (framed)



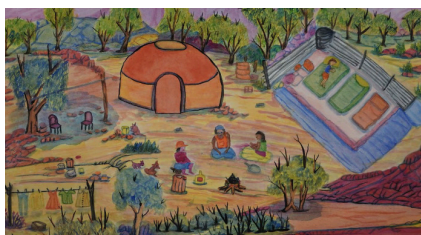
Vanessa Inkamala
Rutjipma (Mt Sonder), NT (detail)
2022
Watercolours on paper
33x51cm
\$920 (framed)



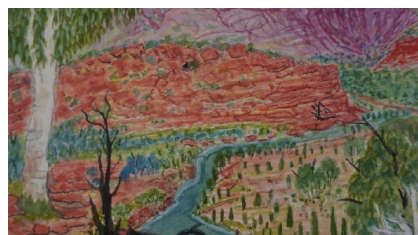
Marcus Wheeler
Entrance to Palm Valley, NT (detail)
2022
Watercolours on paper
20x29cm
\$420 (framed)



Reinhold Inkamala
Rutjipma (Mt Sonder), NT (detail)
2022
Watercolours on paper
54x74cm
\$1395 (framed)



Kathy Inkamala
Homeless on my Homeland, NT (detail)
2022
Watercolours on paper
33x51cm
\$920 (framed)



Selma Coulthard
Ntaria – Mt Hermannsburg, NT (detail)
2022
Watercolours on paper
19x29cm
\$440 (framed)



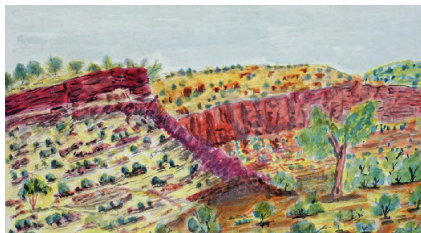
Dellina Inkamala
homelessness, NT (detail)
2022
Watercolours on paper
33x51cm
\$820 (framed)

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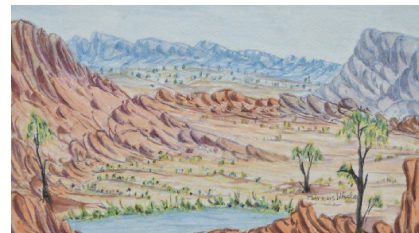
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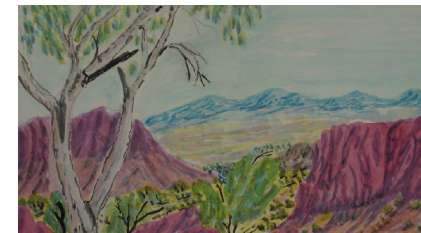
Mervyn Rubuntja
Mt Gillen in the West MacDonnell Ranges, NT (detail)
2022
Watercolours on paper
34x52cm
\$1450 (framed)



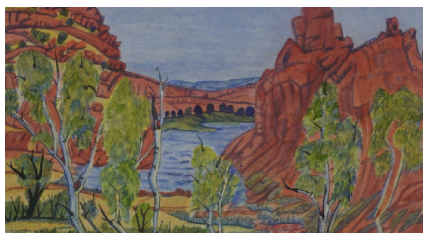
Betty Namatjira Wheeler
Alyape (Palm Valley), NT (detail)
2022
Watercolours on paper
22.5x32cm
\$420 (framed)



Marcus Wheller
Tjoritja (West MacDonnell Ranges), NT (detail)
2022
Watercolours on paper
25x35cm
\$440 (framed)



Betty Namatjira Wheeler
Tjoritja (West MacDonnell Ranges), NT (detail)
2022
Watercolours on paper
23x33cm
\$420 (framed)



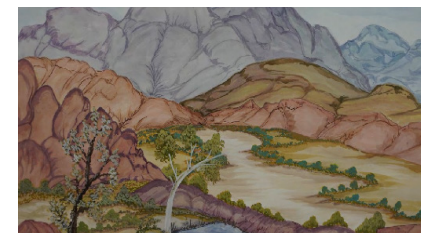
Kathy Inkamala
Yaparipa (Glen Helen), NT (detail)
2022
Watercolours on paper
19x27cm
\$295 (framed)



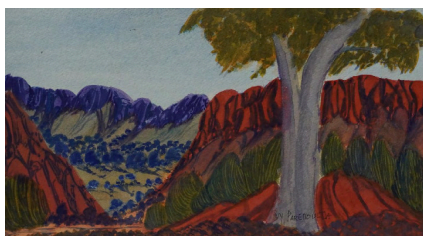
Vanessa Inkamala
Rutjipma (Mt Sonder), NT (detail)
2022
Watercolours on paper
36x54cm
SOLD



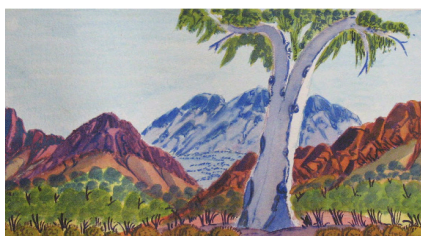
Ivy Pareroultja
Near Jay Creek, NT (detail)
2022
Watercolours on paper
26x36cm
\$560 (framed)



Vanessa Inkamala
Tjoritja (West MacDonnell Ranges), NT (detail)
2022
Watercolours on paper
52x71cm
SOLD



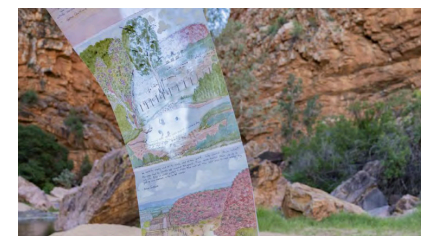
Ivy Pareroultja
Tjoritja (West MacDonnell Ranges), NT (detail)
2022
Watercolours on paper
23x54cm
\$860 (framed)



Ivy Pareroultja
Tjoritja (West MacDonnell Ranges), NT (detail)
2022
Watercolours on paper
23x54cm
\$860 (framed)



Mervyn Rubuntja
Mt Gillen, NT (detail)
2022
Watercolour pigment on repurposed road sign
50.5x80cm
\$3100



Selma Coulthard, Vanessa Inkamala, Kathy Inkamala, Dellina Inkamala, Betty Namatjira, Mona Lisa Clements, Dianne Inkamala, Delray Inkamala, Mandy Malbunka, Bronwyn Lankin, Tina Malbunka
Woven in time
2022
Watercolour on silk screen
294x49cm (6 panels)
SOLD