

Lirrwati to Wilkinkarra: A Nanala Family Exhibition

16 August – 13 September 2025



In collaboration with Warlayirti Artists

Lirrwati to Wilkinkarra is a landmark family exhibition, bringing together the artistic legacy of matriarch Ningie Nanala and her children — Vincent, Winifred, and Dulcie Nanala. Together, they honour the stories and Country of their father, the late and celebrated Balgo master, Tjumpo Tjapanangka (Murtikarlka).

Wilkinkarra is a place of profound significance for the Pintupi and Kukatja peoples, a place where ancestral stories ripple across saltpans, sandhills, and claypans. In the last century, with the arrival of Kartiya (whitefella) and their cattle, the old man — Murtikarlka (Tjumpo Tjapanangka) — made the hard decision to lead his people north, away from Wilkinkarra, to the Balgo Hills Mission. But Country was never forgotten. Stories evolved, travelled, and took new shape in the brilliance of Balgo painting, where towering dunes and shimmering lakes transformed into kaleidoscopic fields of dot and colour.

This exhibition carries deep significance: it presents some of the last works painted by Ningie, now frail and no longer able to paint. A pioneering Balgo artist, Ningie’s dramatic, thickly applied ‘rivers’ of paint have been treasured for decades. In her final years, her loose, wild brushwork captured a raw and intimate knowledge of Country — a lifetime’s worth of memory and connection laid onto canvas.

Now her children carry that mantle. Each brings their own voice, their own relationship to the lands south of Balgo. Vincent carries the precise, optical Pintupi style passed down from his father Tjumpo and half-brother, renowned Papunya Tula artist Warlimpirrnga Tjapaltjarri.

Dulcie’s works glow with the desert hues of her parents’ country — saltpans, claypans, and bushfoods reimagined through contemporary stylisation. And Winifred, who speaks strongly of following in her parents’ footsteps, merges her mother’s dense dotting with her father’s strong form, holding both lineages with pride.

In August 2022, supported by Warlayirti Artists, the Nanala family journeyed south from Balgo to reconnect with their homelands — travelling from Ningie’s birthplace at Lirrwati to Wilkinkarra and the surrounding Country, including Ngukarnupalkarr, where Tjumpo once dug a well so his family could return long into the future. For many, it was their first time returning to these places, long known only through story and dream. As Winifred says, “Now it’s my turn to tell story.”

Wilkinkarra was never truly abandoned. Even as the old men walked away, their footsteps remained, transforming song into canvas, into the shimmering colour fields now celebrated as Balgo Art. In *Lirrwati to Wilkinkarra*, the next generation reclaims those tracks, not only remembering but renewing. This is an exhibition of pride and longing - for Country, for family, for the enduring ties that bind people to land.

Written by Poppy Lever, Manager at Warlayirti Artists together with the Nanala family 2025

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Ningie Nanala

Yula, 2016

483-16

Acrylic on canvas

40 x 30 cm

SOLD

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Ningie Nanala

Yula, 2014

216-14

Acrylic on canvas

40 x 30 cm

\$ 800.00

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Ningie Nanala

Yula, 2014

273-14

Acrylic on canvas

40 x 30 cm

\$ 800.00

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Vincent Nanala

Ngukarnupalkarr, 2022

1123-22

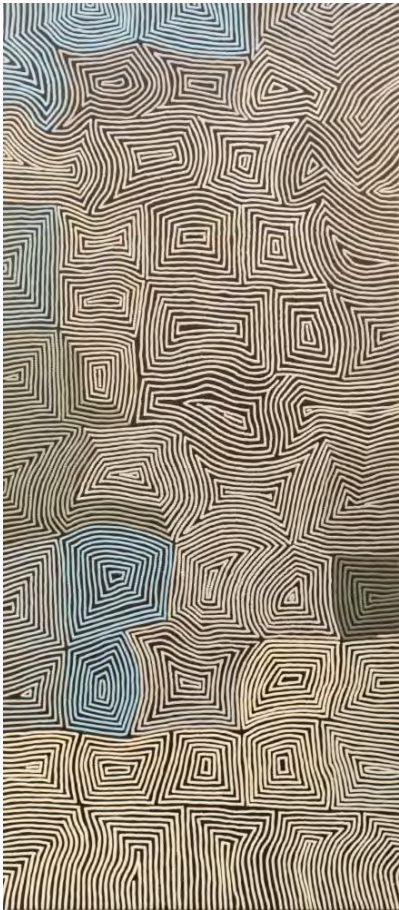
Acrylic on canvas

122 x 102 cm

\$ 4,760.00

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Vincent Nanala

Ngukarnupalkarr, 2024

72-24

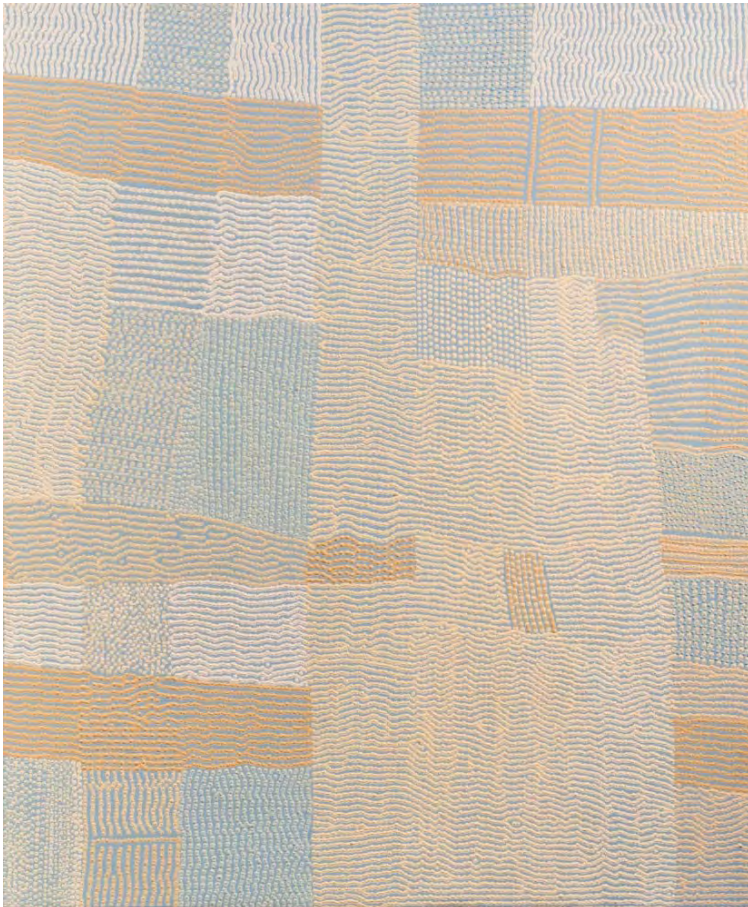
Acrylic on canvas

183 x 81 cm

\$ 6,400.00

Lirrwati to Wilkinkarra: A Nanala Family Exhibition

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Winifred Nanala

Wilkinkarra, 2023

456-23

Acrylic on canvas

122 x 100 cm

\$ 4,200.00

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Vincent Nanala

Ngukarnupalkarr, 2024

732-24

Acrylic on canvas

122 x 102 cm

\$ 4,760.00

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Winifred Nanala

Wilkinkarra, 2020

505-20

Acrylic on canvas

183 x 81 cm

\$ 5,600.00

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Winifred Nanala

Wilkinkarra, 2020

120-20

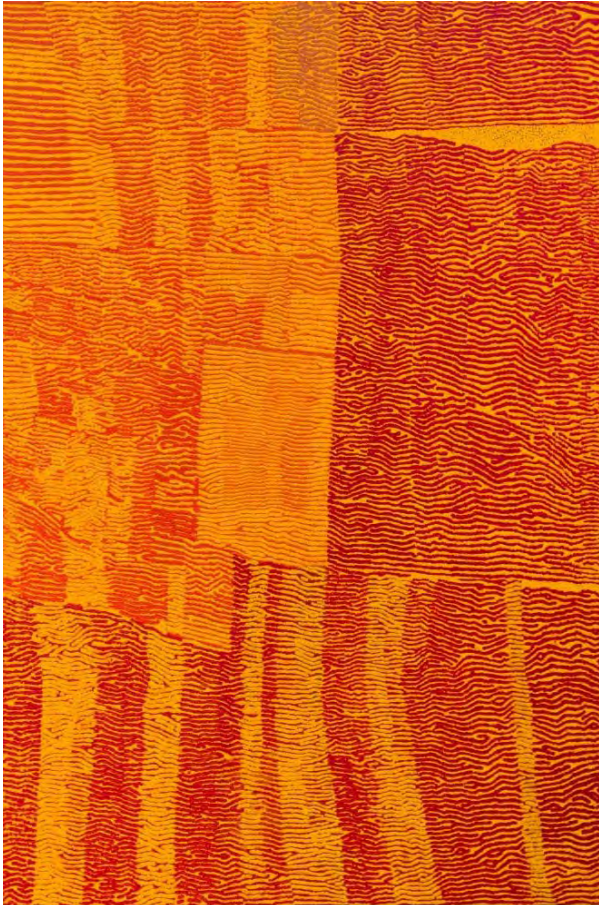
Acrylic on canvas

150 x 100 cm

\$ 5,600.00

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Winifred Nanala

Wilkinkarra, 2022

289-22

Acrylic on canvas

102 x 152 cm

\$ 5,600.00

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Winifred Nanala

Wilkinkarra, 2024

544-24

Acrylic on canvas

183 x 81 cm

\$ 5,600.00

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Vincent Nanala

Ngukarnupalkarr, 2023

126-23

Acrylic on canvas

122 x 102 cm

\$ 4,760.00

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Ningie Nanala

Yula, 2015

458-15

Acrylic on canvas

40 x 30 cm

\$ 1,250.00

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Ningie Nanala

Yula, 2013

197-13

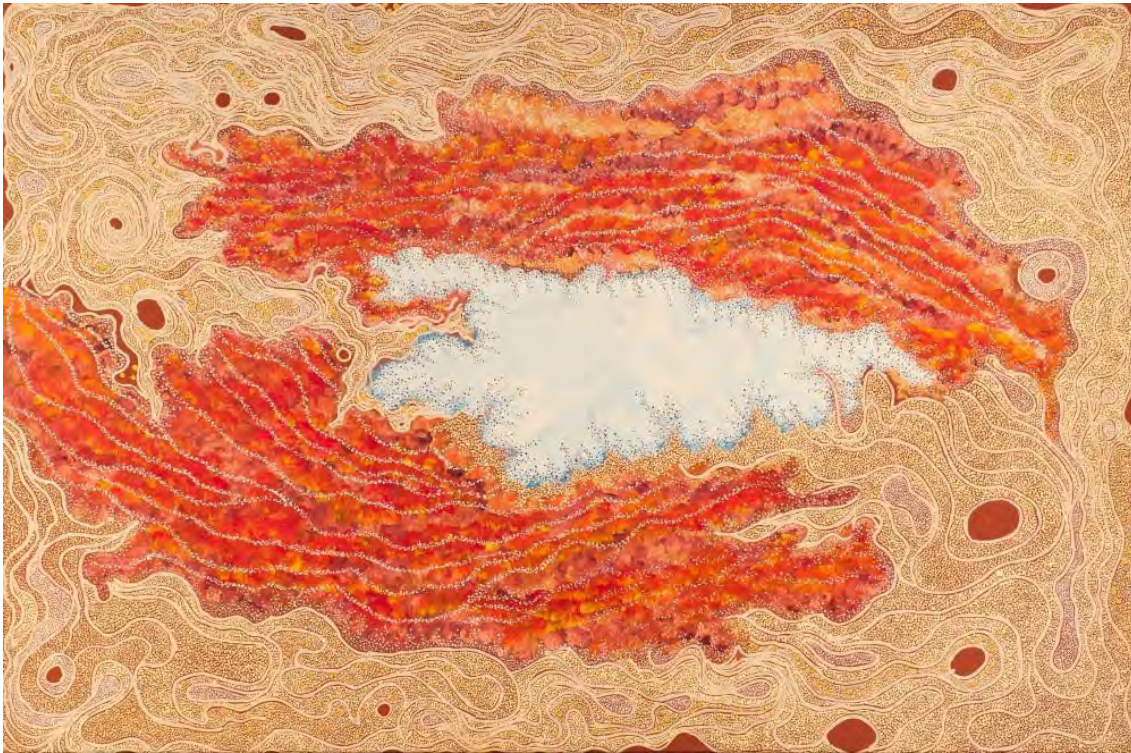
Acrylic on canvas

80 x 30 cm

SOLD

Lirrwati to Wilkinkarra: A Nanala Family Exhibition

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Dulcie Nanala

Wilkinkarra,

746-24

Acrylic on canvas

102 x 152 cm

SOLD

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Ningie Nanala

Lirrwarti, 2021

675-21

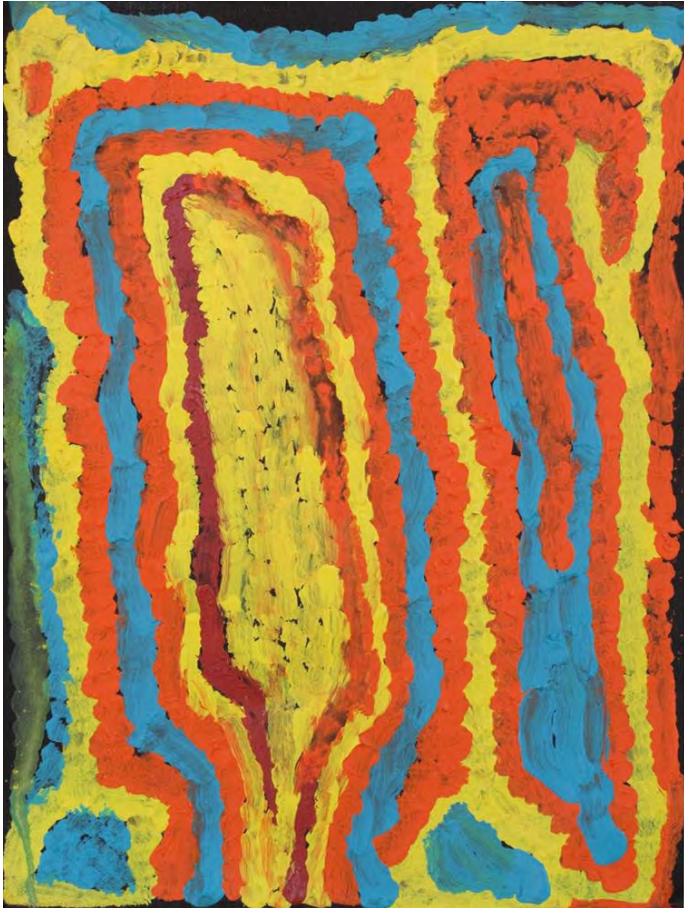
Acrylic on canvas, unstretched

40 x 30 cm

\$ 700.00

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Ningie Nanala

Yula, 2015

284-15

Acrylic on canvas, unstretched

40 x 30 cm

\$ 700.00

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Vincent Nanala

Ngukarnupalkarr, 2023

293-23

Acrylic on canvas, unstretched

102 x 152 cm

\$ 6,100.00

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Ningie Nanala

Skin: Nangala

Language: Kukatja

Ningie was born in the Pippar/Kiwirrkurra area. Her mother and father died when she was very young, and she came to the Balgo Mission at the invitation of Aboriginal people living there. Her family group was camped at Lirrwati close to Balgo. Like many people at that time, she returned to her own country before settling more permanently at the old mission, first at Tjalyiwarn, then at its present site at Wirrimanu from 1962. As a young girl she tended the mission goats, gathering bush food for them to eat. She married and had four children. After her first husband passed away, she married Tjumpo Tjapanangka, another important Balgo artist, and had a further five children.

Ningie has been a prominent Balgo artist for many years, her bold and dramatic style was highly sought after and her unique application of thick 'rivers' of paint result in a highly unique style. In her later years Ningie has developed a 'loose' style of painting as a result of her frailty and loss of eyesight, this has developed into a wild and uninhibited style which only comes with age and a deep knowledge of country. Ningie loves to paint and is a dedicated and prolific artist.

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Vincent Nanala

Skin: Tjapangati Tjapaltjarri

Language: Kukatja Pintupi

Vincent Nanala is the son of renowned Warlayirti Artists Ningie Nanala and Tjumpo Tjapanangka (c.1929-2007). He paints in the Pintupi style of art characterized by strong line work and a minimal palette. He learned this optical painting style from his father Tjumpo and his brother, well-known Papunya Tula artist, Warlimpirrnga Tjapaltjarri.

Vincent completed his schooling in Balgo and has lived there most of his life, although he travels to Kiwirrkurra regularly to visit families. Vincent works at the Balgo Community Store and paints at the art centre on his days off. The Country Vincent paints is far south of Balgo near Lake Mackay, it's called Ngukanpalikarr, snake Tjukurrpa (creation stories and lore). Vincent's father built a well on this Country so families could regularly visit and look after it. Vincent has two daughters and three grandsons.

Vincent is a hard working member of Balgo community, in addition to painting at the art centre most afternoons, he has worked at the shop and recently takes care of the school grounds. Vincent is currently a board member of Warlayirti Artists.

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Winifred Nanala

Skin: Napaltjarri

Language: Kukatja Pintupi

Winifred was born and raised at the new Balgo Mission (current site of Balgo community). She is the daughter of renowned Warlayirti artists Tjumpo (dec) and Ningie Nanala. She has lived across the Kimberley region, spending time with her family between Mulan and Balgo communities. Winnifred has 4 girls, 1 boy and many many grandchildren.

Winifred has spent many years learning painting technique and the countries of her father and mother. She expertly combines her mother's densely applied doing with her father's strong form.

Winifred is a passionate artists who loves to go On Country and spend time on her parent's homelands. She proudly walks in their footsteps.

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Dulcie Nanala

Skin: Napaltjarri Napangarti

Language: Kukatja, Pintupi

Dulcie is the daughter of renowned Balgo artist Ningie Nanala and was grown-up by her step-father Tjumpo Tjapanangka (deceased). She began painting during 1997, and since this time has developed a diverse repertoire of image making. Like her famous parents, Dulcie often paints within the warm desert hues of yellow, orange and red. Primarily, her works relate to that of her parents' country far to the south of Balgo near Wilkinkarra (Lake Mackay), recalling the vast tracks of land with its salt pans, clay pans and plentiful mangarri (bushfoods). Steeped within the Balgo tradition, Dulcie creates beautiful contemporary stylized works that invite the viewer to experience her heritage and country.

Dulcie's father returned to the desert after conflict with the missionaries in Balgo, he reunited with his Pintupi Country and families. They did not reemerge into the 'whitefella world' until the late 1980s, now forever known as the 'Pintupi 9'

Currently, Dulcie along with her extensive family, resides in Balgo. She is a well-respected community member, a primary linguist for this area and continues to create her inspirational artworks.

In 2019 Dulcie was the Warlayirti Artists chairperson, she continues to be an active champion of the Warlayirti Artists.