



JGM GALLERY

24 Howie Street, London SW11 4AY
(Next to the Royal College of Art Battersea campus)

COLOUR FROM THE AUSTRALIAN DESERT

An exhibition of contemporary Aboriginal art opens at JGM Gallery to coincide with the launch of the UK/Australia Season

Works by seven Aboriginal artists from the Warlpiri people in Australia's central desert region are on show as part of COLOUR FROM THE AUSTRALIAN DESERT, the latest contemporary art exhibition at JGM Gallery in Battersea, London.

The exhibition runs from Wednesday 29 September until Saturday 13 November 2021. It includes 24 paintings, all vibrant acrylics on linen or canvas, from some of the most celebrated Aboriginal artists in Australia's Northern Territory.

The seven artists, all women, created their works at the Indigenous-owned art centre in the Lajamanu community, on the edge of the Tanami Desert, halfway between Alice Springs and Darwin. The seven artists are:

Biddy Yulngarri Long (b.1940)
Judy Napangardi Martin (b.1940)
[Kitty Napanangka Simon](#) (b.1948)
[Ms L. Hargraves](#) (1930- 2018)
[Myra Patrick Herbert](#) (b.1946)
[Rosie Napurrula Tasman](#) (b.1935)
[Ursula Napangardi Marks](#) (b.1979)

The opening of COLOUR FROM THE AUSTRALIAN DESERT coincides with the launch of the [UK/Australia Season](#), organised jointly by the British Council and the Australian Government. The Season explores and celebrates the diversity of cultures and languages in both countries and runs from September 2021 until December 2022.

At JGM Gallery, all 24 paintings shown as part of COLOUR FROM THE AUSTRALIAN DESERT are rich in free-flowing brushwork, vibrant colours, symbolic shapes, as well as the use of mark making (dots, patterns, lines and textures), which characterises the abstract nature of Aboriginal art.

Each painting is a bird's eye view of the artist's ancestral land, or Country, as told in the Dreaming, the Aboriginal stories and beliefs passed down through the generations. Every generation becomes a custodian of their Dreaming, and the artists often sing their Dreaming stories while they paint, as a way of keeping their links with Country alive.

The Dreamings featured in the works that make up the COLOUR FROM THE AUSTRALIAN DESERT exhibition depict stories about animals (from flocks of budgerigars to the black-headed python), seeds and plants (used for food and medicinal purposes) and the ceremonies performed by the Warlpiri women. Everything relates to Country.

The Aboriginal culture is the world's oldest continuous culture, dating back over 65,000 years. Jennifer Guerrini Maraldi, founder of JGM Gallery, and a leading light in Aboriginal art for over 20 years, explains:

"The seven artists that we are showing as part of the COLOUR FROM THE AUSTRALIAN DESERT exhibition are all inspired by their deep, symbiotic relationship with Country. At the same time, each artist has a unique and recognisable style and way of painting.

"Traditionally Warlpiri artists used natural ochre paints to make maps of Country in the sandy soil. They also painted their bodies for ceremonies, together with their shields, spears and other, utilitarian objects. When acrylic paint first arrived in Lajamanu back in the 1980s, the artists were so happy as finally they could paint the animals and fauna of the desert in their full, bright desert colours!

Jennifer continues: "The Aboriginal people have evolved their culture over tens of thousands of years to withstand the harshness and the changeability of desert conditions. The desert may appear dry, but it is full of vibrancy, especially when rain

kickstarts the wildflowers into bloom, their bright colours 'pinging' against the tawny hues of the desert ochres."

Some featured works of the COLOUR FROM THE AUSTRALIAN DESERT exhibition:



Seed Dreaming by Rosie Napurrula Tasman, 180 x 150cm, acrylic on linen



Purpurlarla Dreaming by Ms L. Hargraves, 180 x 150cm, acrylic on canvas



Bush onion Dreaming by Kitty Simon, 150 x 120cm acrylic on linen



Mina Dreaming by Judy Napangardi Martin, 150 x 120cm acrylic on canvas



Bush Potato Dreaming by Ursula Napangardi Marks, 180 x 150cm acrylic on linen

All the artists have exhibited in Australia and internationally, with works held in major corporate and national collections.

The exhibition is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue of all the works exhibited. The catalogue's introductory essay is written by Professor Margo Neale, one of the leading experts in the field of Aboriginal art, and who is head of the Centre for Indigenous Knowledges and senior Indigenous curator and principal adviser to the director of the National Museum of Australia.

For further information, and for high-resolution images for media use, please contact us at info@jmgallery.com or on 0207 228 6027.

Credit for header image: *Black-Headed Python Dreaming* by Ms L Hargraves, 180 x 60cm acrylic on linen.



Warnayaka Art & Culture

