



Kathleen Kngale

Born in 1934, Utopia, Northern Territory, Australia.

BIOGRAPHY

Kathleen Kngale, an Anmatyerr woman from Arlperre “Country”, began her artistic career in the late 1970s when batik-making methods were introduced to the women of the Utopia Region in Central Australia led by artist, Jenny Green. Kngale’s early works in the batik medium were featured in the seminal group show at the Tandanya Aboriginal Cultural Institute, Adelaide, in 1988, titled UTOPIA: A Picture Story. UTOPIA exhibited works from a large group of over eighty Alyawarr and Anmatyerr women who formed the Utopia Women’s Batik Group in 1978 and which Kngale was a member of. The exhibition toured internationally before the collected works were purchased by a prominent Australian collector, the Holmes à Court family collection in Perth. Later, founders of the Batik Group rose to become significant players in the Australian and international art scenes, including Emily Kngwarreye, Audrey Kngwarreye, Lena Pwerle, Rosy Kunoth Kngwarreye, and the Petyarre Sisters. Although Kngale belongs to the illustrious Utopia Region tradition and comes from a family of practicing artists, namely her two sisters Polly and Angeline Kngale, it was twenty years after she started painting that Kngale was acknowledged as one of the most significant and exciting contributors to contemporary art emerging from Utopia.

Kngale transitioned to painting on canvas with acrylic paints in the 1980s together with the other women involved in the Utopia Women’s Batik Group. A project organised by the Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association (CAAMA) introduced the women to this medium.

Kngale came into the spotlight for paintings of her “Anwekety” (Bush Plum) “Dreaming” in the early 2000s. “Anwekety” is a prized food source for Anmatyerr women, a fruit which ripens between Christmas and May in Arlperre “Country” after good rainfall. Her large-scale paintings can be interpreted as guiding the viewer through the ripening process of the Bush Plum, from astringent yellows and oranges in their immature phase to luscious pinks and purples. These rich pigments swirl across Kngale’s canvases, layer upon flowing layer of scattered dot-work, building a deep space onto which as a final touch she applies a screen of less weighty pastel hues with a freer brush stroke. Kngale’s sharpened technique through decades of experience working in the acrylic medium is apparent through her capacity to achieve a sense of lightness contrasted by a vast spatial depth in her works. While Kngale’s Bush Plum paintings focus on the growth of the fruit itself, they can also be interpreted as aerial landscapes tracing the journeys across “Country” of foraging Anmatyerr women searching for the “Anwekety” crop. The movement between underlying colours in her works can be seen to mark where the “Bush Plum” is in abundance and where it is lacking. The paintings act as tributes to the Ancestors’ creation from whom Kngale’s “Dreaming” story derives, the overlaying of pigment in her paintings performing these ever-deepening levels of interpretation from a material standpoint.

EXHIBITIONS

- 2020 *Polly Ngale & Kathleen Ngale: Bush Plum Dreaming*, Japingka Gallery, Perth, Australia
- 2018 *Painting on Country - Utopia Artists*, Japingka Gallery, Perth, Australia
- 2018 *Beyond the Veil*, Olsen Gruin Gallery, New York, United States
- 2017 *Utopia: the artists of Delmore Downs*, Yaama Ganu Gallery, Moree, Australia
- 2017 *Desert Dots II*, Utopia Lane Gallery, Melbourne, Australia
- 2015 *Wynners*, Kate Owen Gallery, Sydney, Australia
- 2014 *Metro Gallery*, Victoria, in conjunction with Delmore Gallery, Northern Territory, Australia
- 2014 *Visions of Utopia*, Mitchell Fine Art, Brisbane, Australia
- 2010 *Spring*, Kate Owen Gallery, Sydney, Australia
- 2009 JGM Art, London, United Kingdom
- 2008 *Emily Kngwarreye and her Legacy*, Hillside Forum, Tokyo, Japan
- 2008 *Power of Place*, Tandanya National Aboriginal Cultural Institute, Adelaide, Australia
- 2008 *Utopia and Beyond*, Barry Stern Gallery, Sydney, Australia
- 2007 *Arts d’Australie*, Stephane Jacob, Paris, France
- 2007 *Desert Song*, Brush with Art Festival, Prairie Hotel, Parachilna, Spain
- 2007 *Patterns of Power, art from the Eastern Desert*, Simmer on the Bay Gallery, Sydney, Australia

- 2006 *Senior Women of Utopia*, Gallery G, Brisbane, Australia
2006 Galerie Clément, Vevey, Switzerland
2006 Lorraine Diggins exhibition, London, United Kingdom
2005 Neville Keating Gallery, London, United Kingdom
2005 October Gallery, London, United Kingdom
2004 Desert Mob, Araluen Art Centre, Alice Springs, Australia
2002 *Two sisters, Kathleen and Polly*, Lorraine Diggins, Melbourne, Australia
2002 *Australian Modern*, Fondazione Mudima, Milan, Italy
2001 *Utopia a Special Painting Place*, Bett Gallery, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia
2001 *Desert Mob*, Araluen Art Centre, Alice Springs, Northern Territory, Australia
2001 *Bush Plum Dreaming*, Indigenart, Perth, Western Australia
2000 *Urapunja artists in Brisbane*, Micheal Sourgnés, Australia
2000 *Out of the Desert*, Desert Gallery, Sydney, Australia
2000 *Arts d'Australie*, Stéphane Jacob, Paris, France
1992 *Modern Art-Ancient Icon*, The World Bank, Washington, USA
-

AWARDS AND PRIZES

- 2008 NATSIAA - Finalist
2008 Wynne Prize, Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney - Finalist
2000 NATSIAA - Finalist
-

COLLECTIONS

- National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, Australia
Queensland Art Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, Australia
Donald Holt Collection
Holmas a Court Collection
Janet Holt Collection
Thomas Vroom Collection, Utrecht, The Netherlands

JGM GALLERY

24 Howie Street London SW11 4AY

Phone: +44 (0) 207 228 6027 | Email: info@jgmgallery.com | Website: www.jgmgallery.com