New Narratives
PAPUNYA TJUPI PRINTS WITH CICADA PRESS

Papunya is an Aboriginal settlement situated on a dusty dirt track approximately 160 miles northwest of Alice Springs. About 350 people who speak Luritja, Anmatyerre, Warlpiri and Arrernte call Papunya home today. While many desert communities were founded as missions, Papunya came into being in the late 1950s when the Australian government relocated 400 people from Haasts Bluff settlement because of problems with the water supply. By the 1970s, the population had grown to more than 1000 people, including many ex-stockmen and their families, and 200 Pintupi people who had been still living a hunter-gatherer lifestyle in their remote western homelands. Associated problems of overcrowding, disease and extreme poverty exacerbated cultural tensions within the community. These forces acted as the crucible in which the contemporary Western Desert art movement was forged.

The feeling of displacement that many residents of Papunya experienced was palpable even in their earliest artworks. Beginning in 1971, a small group of men began painting with acrylics on masonite boards, representing the sacred sites and stories associated with their traditional homelands outside of Papunya. Geoffroy Bardon, an art teacher at the school in 1971-72, encouraged the men to use the iconography of sand drawing and body painting, to express their tjukurrpa (Dreamings). When their efforts resulted in sales of artwork, the original ‘painting men’ incorporated themselves as Papunya Tula Artists.

With the income provided by painting, some of the Pintupi founders of Papunya Tula began moving back to their homelands, west of Papunya. Over the following decades, Papunya Tula Artists served a number of Aboriginal communities but gradually withdrew from Papunya itself, resulting in what Western Desert art expert Vivien Johnson calls, “the years of awful irony, when there was no art center in the birthplace of the desert art movement.”

A new organization, Papunya Tjupi Arts, was founded in 2007 by leading artist Michael Jagamarra Nelson AO and the descendents of some of the original Papunya Tula painters. Named after the honey ant (tjupi), one of the local tjukurrpa stories, this community art center serves more than 100 artists working in a variety of media including acrylic painting, printmaking, wood carving, basket weaving and jewellery making.

New Narratives represents an eight-year collaboration with Michael Kempson, master printer and director of Cicada Press at the University of New South Wales Art & Design in Sydney. By conducting regular workshops in Papunya and Sydney, Kempson has introduced intaglio printmaking as a new medium for Papunya Tjupi artists to translate their old stories into art.

The medium may have changed, but the reasons for making art have not. One of the artists, Tilau Nangala, says “the children can watch me paint and learn, so I can pass on my Dreaming and stories to my grandchildren.” Papunya Tjupi Art Centre continues to be a conduit for internationally renowned senior artists to pass their experience and expertise on to the next generation.


ACKNOWLEDGMENTS
Cicada Press, University of New South Wales Art & Design
Michael Kempson
Papunya Tjupi Art Centre Aboriginal Corporation
Vivien Johnson

Kluger-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection of the University of Virginia
400 Worrell Drive, Charlottesville, VA 22911
kluger-ruhe@virginia.edu
www.kluger-ruhe.org
434.244.0234

Tuesday · Saturday, 10 am - 4 pm & Sunday, 1 - 5 pm
Free guided tour every Saturday, 10:30 am

New Narratives
January 20 - May 17, 2015
Opening Reception
Friday, January 23, 5:30 - 7:30 pm
Reception and Talk with Master Printer Michael Kempson
Thursday, March 26, 5:30 pm

400 Worrell Drive, Charlottesville, VA 22911
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Michael Jagamarra Nelson AO

Nelson lived a traditional bush life until his parents migrated to Haasts Bluff and later Yulara, where he was educated. As a young man he moved north and worked in a variety of jobs including buffalo shooter and drover. After moving to Papunya, he worked for the local council, started painting, got married, and had three children. In 1984, a year after he started painting, he won the inaugural National Aboriginal Art Award. In 1986 his work was exhibited in the Biennale of Sydney and was included alongside Andy Warhol in the Biennale of Sydney. In 1997, he completed a painting that was included in the exhibition “The World of Indigenous Australia” at the Sydney Opera House. In 1999, he was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia for his role in the Aboriginal art movement. He remains one of the best-known contemporary Indigenous Australian artists and was the inaugural Chairman of Papunya Tjupi Arts.

Mary Roberts Nakamarra

Mary was born at Laramba at Napperby Station and her family moved to Papunya when she was eight years old. She attended Papunya School and continued her education at Yirara College in Alice Springs before returning to Papunya. Mary is married and had two young daughters. She has stayed in Papunya since then, working at the hospital, the Papunya Clinic as a community health educator. She is a founding member of Papunya Tjupi and has worked there as an arts worker since it was founded. She now lives at Five Mile, an outstation of Papunya, and is married to Tjukynnyngala’s grandson. She was involved with Papunya Tjupi’s first print workshop at Cicada Press in 2002. She was born in Haasts Bluff, but her family moved to Papunya when she was two years old and she has lived there ever since. Of the one streets she is named after her father, and her mother was a strong woman who took a leading role in women’s ceremonies for the Papunya community. For many years Marlene worked for Papunya School as a cleaner, and now she goes to Papunya Tjupi to paint nearly every day. Maureen mainly paints a site called Kalipinypa, also painted by her famous uncle Johnny Warangkula Tjupurrula. The diamond pattern in this print represents the waterholes and sand hills there.

Maylene Marshall Nakamarra

Maylene was the daughter of Sandra Turner Nampitjinpa, who was one of the first young women painters for Papunya Tula Artists and the first female Indigenous artist from the desert whose work was purchased by the National Gallery of Australia. Maylene’s grandmother taught her to paint in the 1980s when the family was living in Mount Long, where she worked at the school. She now lives at Five Mile, an outstation of Papunya, and is married to Tjukynnyngala’s grandson. She was involved with Papunya Tjupi’s first print workshop at Cicada Press in 2002. She was born in Haasts Bluff, but her family moved to Papunya when she was two years old and she has lived there ever since. Of the one streets she is named after her father, and her mother was a strong woman who took a leading role in women’s ceremonies for the Papunya community. For many years Marlene worked for Papunya School as a cleaner, and now she goes to Papunya Tjupi to paint nearly every day. Maureen mainly paints a site called Kalipinypa, also painted by her famous uncle Johnny Warangkula Tjupurrula. The diamond pattern in this print represents the waterholes and sand hills there.

Marylyn Marchant

Marylyn was born at Laramba at Napperby Station and her family moved to Papunya when she was eight years old. She attended Papunya School and continued her education at Yirara College in Alice Springs before returning to Papunya, where she married and had four children. Isobel worked for World Vision in Papunya as an agro-care worker and at the Papunya Clinic as a community health educator. She is a founding member of Papunya Tjupi and has worked there as an arts worker since it was founded. She now lives at Five Mile, an outstation of Papunya, and is married to Tjukynnyngala’s grandson. She was involved with Papunya Tjupi’s first print workshop at Cicada Press in 2002.
Michael Jagamarra Nelson AO

Michael Nelson lived a traditional bush life until his parents migrated to Haasts Bluff and later Yuendumu, where he was educated. As a young man he moved north and worked in a variety of jobs including buffalo shooter and drover. After moving to Papunya, he worked for the local council, started painting, got married, and had three children. In 1984, a year after he started painting, he won the inaugural National Aboriginal Art Award. In 1990 his work was exhibited in the Biennale of Sydney and was included alongside Andy Warhol in the State of the Art, at the Aga Khan Museum. In 1997, his painting a painting that was exhibited in the Sydney Opera House. In 1993, Michael was awarded a Member of the Order of Australia for his role in the Aboriginal art movement. He remains one of the best-known contemporary Aboriginal Australian artists and was the inaugurator Chairman of Papunya Tula Arts.

Isobel Major Nampitjina

Isobel was born at Laramba at Napperby Station and her family moved to Papunya when she was eight years old. Isobel worked for World Vision in Papunya as an aged-care worker and moved to Haasts Bluff in 1988. She married George Bush Tjungurrayi, a prominent Papunya Tula artist, and had three sons. In the 1980s her family moved to an outstation at NapWrapupa near Papunya where her mother’s country and to teach our traditional culture through painting. This is very, very important to us.”

Valerie Lynch Nampijinpa

Born in Papunya, Valerie was the daughter of Nellie Nangala and Two Bob Tjungurrayi, two artists who painted for Papunya Tula Artists in the 1980s. Her mother was one of the women from Papunya who were the first to join the painting movement. Valerie attended school in Papunya, had four sons, and lived with her family at Five Mile outside. Valerie was a founding member of Papunya Tula and often painted the site of Karramerr (Mount Wedge), which she inherited from her father.

Tilau Nangala

Tilau was born in the Haasts Bluff area. As a child her family still lived in the bush, supplementing their diet of bush Tucker (native foods) with supplies from the ration depot at Haasts Bluff, and for this reason she never attended school. When her family migrated to Papunya in the first days of the settlement, Tilau was already married and had two young daughters. She has stayed in Papunya since then, working at the hospital, the communal kitchen, and most recently at the school, where she has passed on her love of dancing and culture to younger generations. Tilau’s paintings almost always depict the site of Mikiyntji, which she inherited from her father. She says that her auntie taught her culture and history, but she developed her own bold and lyrical way of painting them. “So the children can watch me paint and learn, so I can pass on my Dreaming story and stories to my grandchildren.”

Mary Roberts Nakamarra

Mary was born in Papunya, and attended school there as a child. At eleven years of age she began painting, following the death of her grandfather, Papunya Tula artist Jimmy (“Limpi”) Tjapangati. Her father was a respected senior man in Papunya and also a Lutheran pastor. Mary moved to Alice Springs to attend Virata College, and returning to Papunya, she eventually married a local artist. Mary has had a long career as an artist and is an artist who has become an artist. She has fond early memories of watching her grandfather paint and her work is similar in style. Her aunt Larabelle encouraged her to paint her grandfather’s stories. Mary said, “She told me to paint before she passed away and the only thing that I want to paint that story... I have only just started.”

Martha Macdonald Napaltjarri

Martha was born in Haasts Bluff, but her family moved to Papunya when she was two years old and she has lived there ever since. One of the streets there is named after her father, and her mother was a strong law woman who took a leading role in women’s ceremonies for the Papunya community. For many years Martha worked for Papunya School as a cleaner, and now she goes to Papunya to paint nearly every day. Martha mainly paints a site called Kalarpa, also painted by her famous uncle Johnny Warangkula Tjupurrula. The diamond pattern in this print represents the waterholes and sand hills there.

Beylvania Puntungka Napanangka

Beylvania is the daughter of Athina Puntungka Tjapangati and Luke Napanangka Tjapangati. She says that she started painting with her first husband at the age of 20. Her paintings are known for their themes about waterholes and country. She says that these paintings are an essential part of the cultural heritage of the Papunya Tula artists and that she is proud to have inherited her father’s artistic legacy.

Maureen Poulson Napangardi

Maureen was born in Haasts Bluff, but her family moved to Papunya when she was two years old and she has lived there ever since. One of the streets there is named after her father, and her mother was a strong law woman who took a leading role in women’s ceremonies for the Papunya community. For many years Martha worked for Papunya School as a cleaner, and now she goes to Papunya to paint nearly every day. Martha mainly paints a site called Kalipinypa, which she inherited from her father. She says that her auntie taught her culture and history, but she developed her own bold and lyrical way of painting them. “So the children can watch me paint and learn, so I can pass on my Dreaming story and stories to my grandchildren.”

Dorothy Bush Sunngurrarrat

Dorothy bush migrated after her family moved to the Haasts Bluff area from further west. She married George Bush Tjungurrayi, a prominent Papunya Tula artist, and had three sons. In the 1980s her family moved to an outstation at Napperby Station near Papunya where her mother’s country and

Nellie Nangala

Nellie was born at Napperby Station and her family moved to Papunya when she was eight years old. She attended Papunya School and continued her education at School College in Alice Springs before returning to Papunya, where she married and had four children. Nellie worked for World Vision in Papunya as an agro-care worker and at the Papunya Clinic, as a community health educator. She is a founding member of Papunya Tula and is also on the board of Doxart, an organization that supports the arts in Central Australia. She has said, “I paint for the future of my culture and for the family.”

Narlie Nelson Nakamarra

Narlie Nelson Nakamarra was born in Haasts Bluff, Naalin is the daughter of a renowned Papunya Tula artist Johnny Warangkula Tjupurrula. She worked for fifteen years at the Papunya preschool before she left and began painting. She mostly paints the site of Kalipinypa, which she inherited from her father. She is also a captivating storyteller and an accomplished maker of baskets and seed necklaces.

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Mary Roberts Nakamarra

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Michael Jagamara Nelson AO

Michael Jagamara Nelson lived a traditional bush life until his parents migrated to Haasts Bluff and later Yuendumu, where he was educated. As a young man he moved north and worked in a variety of jobs including buffalo shooter and drover. After moving to Papunya, he worked for the local council, started painting, got married, and had three children. In 1984, a year after he started painting, he won the inaugural National Aboriginal Art Award. In 1986 his work was exhibited in the Biennale of Sydney and was included alongside Andy Warhol in State of the Art, a 1988 documentary. In 1987, he completed a painting that was included in one of the Sydney Opera House's annual art exhibitions. In 1993, Michael was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia for his role in the Aboriginal art movement. He remains one of the best-known contemporary Indigenous Australian artists and was the inaugural Chairman of Papunya Tula Arts.

Mary Robert's Nakambara

Mary was born at Haasts Bluff and attended school there as a child. At eleven years of age she moved to Papunya following the death of her father, Papunya Tula painter Jimmy (‘Lump’) Tjapangati. Her father was a respected senior law man in Papunya and also a Lutheran pastor. Mary moved to Alice Springs to attend Virina College, returning to Papunya where she participated in an adult education program. She is the only one of her family to have become an artist. She has fond early memories of watching her grandfather paint and their trick is similar to style. Her aunt Linda helped her encourage her to paint her grandmother’s stories. Mary said, “Told me to paint before she passed away and the most important thing that I want to paint that story… I have only just started.”

Maylene Marshall Nakambara

Born in Papunya, Maylene is the daughter of Sandra Turner Napintji, who was one of the first young women painters for Papunya Tula Artists and the first female Indigenous artist from the desert whose work was purchased by the National Gallery of Australia. Maylene’s grandfather taught her to paint in the 1980s when the family was living at Mount Liebig, where she worked in the school. She now lives at Five Mile, an extension of Papunya, and is married to Tuku Nangala’s grandson. She was involved with Papunya Tula’s first print workshop at Cicada Press in 2000.

Isobel Major Nakambara

Isobel was born in Papunya, she is the granddaughter of a first-generation Papunya Tula artist Bill Stockman Napintji. She is married, has four children, and has been an art worker at Papunya Tula Artists since 1993. She gave birth to her first child at the Papunya Clinic in 2004 and now works as an agricultural teacher and helps to organize painting workshops and events. Isobel has been painting since she was eight years old and is one of the most prolific artists at Papunya Tula. She has painted many stories and is known for her detailed and realistic depictions of landscape and people.

Valerie Lynch Lynch

Valerie was born in the Haasts Bluff area. As a child her family still lived in the bush and would supplement their diet of bush Tucker (native foods) with supplies from the ration depot at Haasts Bluff, and for this reason she never attended school. When her family migrated to Papunya in 1984, her father was already a successful painter. She stayed in Papunya since then, working in the hospital, the community kitchen, and most recently she has been employed at the Papunya Literary Centre. For young generation, Valerie has a deep respect for the culture and is an important role model for the Papunya community. She has been involved in education and community development initiatives and has made a significant contribution to the Papunya Tula Art movement.

Doris Bush Tungarrayi

Doris was born after her family migrated to the Haasts Bluff area from further west. She married George Bush Tjungurrayi, a prominent Papunya Tula artist, and had three sons. In the 1980s her family moved to an outstation at Nitmiluk, where her mother’s extended family lived. They lived there from their Papunya and Alice Springs, where they lived until they moved to Papunya. She then married, had two daughters, was widowed and remarried. Beulah is one of Papunya Tula’s senior artists. In recent years she mostly paints dramatic versions of the Papunya Tula’s senior artists. In recent years she mostly paints dramatic versions of the Dreaming story inherited from her grandmother.

Vivien Johnson

These artists remind the world that Papunya’s illustrous legacy as an art producing community belongs to them. – Vivien Johnson

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The medium may have changed, but the reasons for making art have not. One of the artists, Tilau Nangala, says "the children can watch me paint and learn, so I can pass on my Dreaming and stories to my grandchildren." Papunya Tjupi Art Centre continues to be a conduit for internationally renowned senior artists to pass their experience and expertise on to the next generation.

Acknowledgments

Cicada Press, University of New South Wales Art & Design
Michael Kempson
Papunya Tjupi Art Centre Aboriginal Corporation
Vivien Johnson

Kluger-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection
of the University of Virginia
400 Worrell Drive, Charlottesville, VA 22911
kluger-ruhe@virginia.edu
www.kluger-ruhe.org
434.244.0234

Tuesday - Saturday, 10 am - 4 pm & Sunday, 1 - 5 pm
Free guided tour every Saturday, 10:30 am