

# *Shifting Ground*

Over the last two decades, there has been an accelerated amount of print production by Indigenous artists from across Australia who have created works that have profoundly reshaped and Indigenized the medium. This exhibition is drawn from a single, but monumental, collection of more than 1300 prints made by Indigenous artists who have worked with Basil Hall Editions since 2002.

Basil Hall, and a roster of esteemed printmakers, have run workshops with more than fifty-five Aboriginal-run art centers predominately in remote parts of the Northern Territory, South Australia, and Western Australia and collaborated with renowned independent artists in the studio—often working with over a hundred artists a year. The result is a collection that is a complex, roving topography of artistic practice that traverses vast geographies and cultural perspectives and that reveals a stunning diversity of experimental and singular approaches to printmaking by both emerging and senior artists. Rather than themed according to region or style, this exhibition displays key artistic practices that crisscross the vast diversity of the collection thereby revealing some of its central tendencies.

There are several major themes across the exhibition. *Enigmatic Figures* (in this gallery) showcases artists who have made series of works that explore figurative forms—we see the cheeky *mamu* spirits of Nura Rupert, Tiger Yaltangki's cast of lively characters and animals, and striking depictions of *Wandjina* spirits by Edna Dale.

*Re-Performing Marks* (in the gallery to the left) turns to print series where key forms or motifs are repeated and reworked. In contrast to the large-scale canvas works some of these artists create, a more distilled, focused, and iterative approach emerges through an engagement with printmaking, evoking notions of the ancestral trace and seasonal and ceremonial cycling.

*Custodians* (in the gallery to the right) looks at the refined and authoritative mark making of ten senior artists, predominantly renowned painters who have deftly discovered a print-based language to depict significant stories, sites, or subjects that each have returned to many times throughout their careers.

—JESSYCA HUTCHENS, Guest Curator

This exhibition is sponsored by Molly and Robert Hardie.

# *Custodians*

*The Custodians: Country and Culture Print Folio*, printed by Basil Hall Editions in 2008, showcases the work of ten senior artists who came from communities across the very north (Top End) and central regions of the Northern Territory and the Kimberley region in the north of Western Australia. The portfolio enjoined their established practices through the medium of print and the theme of custodial ties to each artist's Country and cultural heritage.

The content of these prints traverses many things—plants, animals, weaving, body paint design, ancestral sites, spirit beings, and the universe. The meanings of these things, both personal and cultural, point towards complex webs of social, ecological, and ancestral relationships. Custodianship can refer both to specific roles within a kinship system in relation to sites, stories, ceremony, and totems and a broader sense of care towards the totality of one's cultural inheritance and ensuring its continuance. It is no coincidence that many important knowledge holders, strong in their Law and ceremony, have become significant artists—art becomes a means for expressing, sharing, and enacting deeply felt and practiced custodial connections.

*Custodians* exemplifies the way Basil Hall Editions has worked with artists to amplify and expand upon their existing practices and ways of mark making to create eloquent, iconic images that have become widely disseminated.

*The Custodians: Country and Culture Print Folio* was a collaboration between Basil Hall Editions, Nomad Arts, Alison Kelly Gallery, the artists, and their art centers and galleries: Buku-Larrngay Mulka, Durrmu Arts Peppimenarti, Gallery Gondwana, Gallerie Australis, Injalak Arts and Crafts, Mangkaja Arts, Tiwi Design Aboriginal Corporation, Warlukurlangu Artists Aboriginal Corporation, and Warmun Art Centre.

Renowned for her energetic and highly detailed compositions, Judy Napangardi Watson was a Warlpiri custodian and a senior painter from the Yuendumu community in the Northern Territory. This silkscreen gives vivid form to an enduring subject for Watson: the *Mina Mina Jukurrpa*, a significant ceremonial place and Dreaming that describes the creation journey of a group of women and that belongs to her ancestral homelands in the Tanami Desert where she lived for long periods. The composition shows the *nngalyipi* (snake vine), used for healing and ceremony, and *majardi* (fringed ceremonial dancing skirts).

## **JUDY NAPANGARDI WATSON**

c. 1925 - 2016

Warlpiri

*Majardi Jukurrpa* 2008

Silkscreen on Magnani paper

Collaborators: Basil Hall and Warlukurlangu staff

Printer: Clinton Barker

Gift of Basil Hall, 2023

2023.0006.011.008

Lena Nyabdi is an acclaimed senior artist who painted at Warmun Art Centre in the Kimberley region of Western Australia since its founding in 1998. Nyabdi has been a prolific participant in Basil Hall Editions workshops, many facilitated by printmaker Monique Auricchio. Nyabdi's bold and iconographic mark making translates richly into her etchings, which add softer, inkier materialities. As in this print, her oeuvre focuses on two major Dreamings: *Jimbirlam* (spearpoints) Country, symbolized by staccato, vertical lines; and *Dayiwul Lirlmim* (barramundi scales) represented as many small arcs. The story of the ancestral *Dayiwul* centers on a group of women trying to net the elusive fish and shaping the land as they go. The long, white shape in the foreground depicts a net made from spinifex grass turned to stone. Nyabdi's work is often linked to the modern-day destruction wrought by the Argyle diamond mine on her Country, which has destroyed or displaced elements of the environment she represents in her artworks.

## **LENA NYADBI**

Born c. 1936

Gija

*Dayiwul Ngarrankarni* 2008

Etching on Hahnemühle paper

Collaborator: Basil Hall

Printers: Basil Hall, Merran Sierakowski,  
and Mats Undén

Gift of Basil Hall, 2023

2023.0006.011.004



Janangoo Butcher Cherel was an acclaimed painter and deft mark maker who frequently represented ecological phenomena related to his Country, Imanara, northeast of Fitzroy Crossing in the Kimberley region of Western Australia. His exquisitely patterned compositions are resonant with both the natural and metaphorical poetics of place. Cherel engaged early with printmaking, participating in the first print workshop run at Mangkaja Arts in 1994 by the Australian Print Workshop. For this print, Cherel worked with Basil Hall—employing an aquatint process using an acid spit bite technique to capture similar effects to those of the gouache works on paper he had been making around this time. This gives the repeated, circular forms of the depicted *girndi* (bush plum) vibrant, aqueous depths.

## **JANANGOO BUTCHER CHEREL**

1920 - 2009

Gooniyandi people

*Girndi* 2008

Etching and silkscreen on Hahnemühle paper

Collaborator: Basil Hall

Printers: Basil Hall, Merran Sierakowski,  
and Clinton Barker

Gift of Basil Hall, 2023

2023.0006.011.009

One of the most significant Yolŋu leaders of modern times, Dr. Gawirriṅ Gumana AO fought for Yolŋu land and sea rights, including through the Australian courts, and used art as a vital part of his political advocacy. A renowned bark painter, his work often expressed custodial ties to place. Depicted here is the site of Baraltja, located in a flood plain that drains into Blue Mud Bay on the eastern coast of Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory, and the home of *Mundukul*, the Lighting Snake. It is a place where saltwater and freshwater meet and is linked to the relationship between the Maḍarrpa and Dhaḷwaṅu clans—water from the Dhaḷwaṅu estate feeds the Baraltja plain. In his statement for *Custodians*, Gumana asserted, “Now I’m interested to hear what the *Ngapagi* (white man’s) law (Australian High Court) has to say about this saltwater country.”

## **DR. GAWIRRIṅ GUMANA AO**

c. 1935 - 2016

Clan: Dhaḷwaṅu

*Mundukul at Baraltja* 2008

Etching on Hahnemühle paper

Collaborators: Buku-Larrŋgay Mulka Centre staff

Printers: Basil Hall and Merran Sierakowski

Gift of Basil Hall, 2023

2023.0006.011.007

A renowned traditional healer, Gulumbu Yunupijū created intricately detailed bark paintings and memorial poles. Yunupijū did not depict *miny'tji* (sacred designs), but her works are resonant with connection to Yolŋu story and cosmology while also meditating on universal connections. This is powerfully realized in her works titled *garak* (the universe), which are brimming with her iconic, densely arranged *ganyu* (stars) to create an infinity that holds the seen and unseen. To make this delicate work, Yunupijū etched the printing plate in three layers. This gives the image unique depth, while the variegation of the line work and the undulating, layered coloration beneath creates a shimmering luminosity.

## **GULUMBU YUNUPIJU**

1943 - 2012

Clan: Gumatj

*Garak* 2008

Etching on Hahnemühle paper

Collaborators: Basil Hall and Jacqueline Gribbin

Printers: Jacqueline Gribbin and Monique Auricchio

Gift of Basil Hall, 2023

2023.0006.011.001

This print is named for *Ankung Kunred*, the Honey Dreaming Country of Bardayal 'Lofty' Nadjamerrek's father, Nanjorluk. It was on this escarpment Country in Western Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory that Nadjamerrek grew up watching his father and other men create paintings on rock surfaces. At thirteen he created his first rock-art pieces at Kundjorlomdjorlom. One of the last men to continue this practice, Nadjamerrek went on to create artworks on bark and paper as well as in print. He contributed to the Basil Hall Editions portfolio, *Kunwarrde Bim* (Stone Country Painting) from 2006, for which he and nine other artists made etchings directly responding to the significant rock-art site at Injalak Hill. He also individually painted the ceramic boxes housing each of the portfolios. This work echoes the figurative forms and textures of marking stone, and pints to the enduring cultural significance of this practice.

## **BARDAYAL NADJAMERREK AO**

1926 - 2009  
Kunwinjku

*Ankung Kunred* 2008

Etching and silkscreen on Hahnemühle paper  
Collaborators: Basil Hall and Monique Auricchio  
Printers: Basil Hall, Jacqueline Gribbin, and Clinton Barker  
Gift of Basil Hall, 2023  
2023.0006.011.003



Jean Baptiste (Pulukatu) Apuatimi was a seminal senior artist at Tiwi Design in Wurrumiyanga (Nguiu) on Bathurst Island. This print of *jirtaka* (saw fish) was made in tribute to her late husband, the artist Declan Karrilikiya Apuatimi, who shared songs and stories with her and inspired her to create artworks. In her statement for *Custodians*, she said, “My husband used to get that fish. After we eat it, we get that bone and paint him up. First black, then *jilamara* (body paint design). When he die, they paint up that bone for ceremony. When I paint that I think of him.” In this work, we see Apuatimi’s characteristic use of small sections of different *jilamara* on top of black space, which moves the eye across alternating directions of lines and dotting to create a dynamic, wavering effect.

## **JEAN BAPTISTE (PULUKATU) APUATIMI**

1940 - 2013

Tiwi

Skin Group: Tapatapunga (March Fly)

*Jirtaka (Saw Fish)* 2008

Silkscreen on Magnani paper

Collaborators: Tiwi Design staff and Jacqueline Gribbin

Printer: Clinton Barker

Gift of Basil Hall, 2023

2023.0006.011.006

Interesting intersections exist across Regina Pilawuk Wilson's work as a master weaver, painter, and printmaker. Her linework in the latter two media deftly and intricately captures the warp and weft of weaving and the curving flow of the strands within depictions of *warrgarri* (dilly bag), *wupun* (sun mat), and *syaw* (fish net). *Syaw* are cylindrical scoop nets used in the waterways around Peppimenarti in the Northern Territory that were once made by Wilson's ancestors. She has been active in the revitalization of *syaw* making, a practice that nearly vanished in the missionary era. This print was created by Wilson first painting the vertical lines on the plate, that were then deeply etched, before adding a layer of horizontal lines. These layers and the variegated form of the lines dynamically capture the materiality and movement of the net.

## **REGINA PILAWUK WILSON**

Born 1948  
Ngan'gikurrungurr

*Syaw (Fishnet)* 2008

Etching on Hahnemühle paper  
Collaborators: Basil Hall and Jacqueline Gribbin  
Printers: Jacqueline Gribbin and Monique Auricchio  
Gift of Basil Hall, 2023  
2023.0006.011.002

Kathleen Petyarre began her artistic career creating batik paintings at Utopia in the Northern Territory. She became known for intricate paintings reflecting enduring connections to the Atnangker Country she walked as a child, and from which her family were forcibly moved. Her most recurring subject is the Dreaming narrative of the *Arnkerrth* (Old Woman Mountain or Thorny Devil Lizard), an ancestral being. Petyarre's rhythmic dotting details the journey of the *Arnkerrth* across Country via its tracks—marks that might also allude to its spotted skin and other natural phenomena. Her compositions thus reflect networks of symbols, beings, and relationships. For this print, Petyarre painted acetates to create silkscreens—a method that allowed her to retain the characteristic flow of her fine-dotting technique.

## **KATHLEEN PETYARRE**

c. 1940 - 2018

Anmatyerre people

*Arnkerrth* 2008

Etching and screenprint on Hahnemühle paper

Collaborators: Galerie Australis staff and Basil Hall

Printers: Merran Sierakowski and Sean Smith

Gift of Basil Hall, 2023

2023.0006.011.010

Pathways of intersecting, intricately dotted, roving lines embody the place that Dorothy Napangardi most represented in her artworks—Mina Mina, a significant women’s site on her Country near Lake Mackay in the Tanami Desert, in the Northern Territory, where clay-pans create linear crustations of salt. Known for her unique topographies of *Jukurrpa* (Dreaming), ceremony, and environmental phenomena, Napangardi’s marks evoke shimmering salt as well as the tracks and marks of ancestral women collecting digging sticks that grew upwards out of the ground and performing song and dance across the land. While appearing at first grid-like, the etched dotted lines across this work undulate and flow, like dancing.

## **DOROTHY NAPANGARDI**

c. 1950 - 2013

Warlpiri, Pintupi

*Salt on Mina Mina* 2008

Etching on Hahnemühle paper

Collaborator: Basil Hall

Printers: Basil Hall and Merran Sierakowski

Gift of Basil Hall, 2023

2023.0006.011.005

*...there are many stars, more than we can count. We need the stars, they give us light. And people, we all need each other. There are many sorts of people: we need them all. People must look across at each other, valuing each other.*

— Gulumbu Yunupijū

Renowned as a traditional healer, Gulumbu Yunupijū was one of the leaders in a movement of women artists at Yirrkala who moved away from painting sacred clan designs. As in her larger print displayed in the neighboring gallery, this work depicts one of her most recurrent subjects—the *ganyu* (stars) of the night sky and the universe. Stars feature prominently in significant Yolŋu ancestral narratives, such as that of the *Djulpan* or Seven Sisters story. Indeed, the seven Yunupijū sisters, including Gulumbu, collaborated in 2011 on an epic portfolio of prints with Basil Hall Editions themed around this narrative, each creating unique representations of stars as part of their expansive works. In general, Gulumbu Yunupijū's *ganyu* works reach for more universal themes. While small in scale, this finely etched print conveys the shimmer of her buoyant constellations.

## **GULUMBU YUNUPIJU**

1943 - 2012

Clan: Gumatj

*Ganyu* 2006

Etching on Hahnemühle paper

Collaborator: Basil Hall

Printer: Basil Hall and Natasha Rowell

Gift of Basil Hall, 2023

2023.0006.093

*My father Mungurrawuy Yunupinju taught me how to paint. I learnt from watching him. He was always working. He said to me, “When I am gone you will follow behind me and paint too. Show the people—paint and work.” That is what he said, and that’s what I do.*

— Nyapanyapa Yunupinju

Nyapanyapa Yunupinju was one of Australia’s most acclaimed contemporary artists who rose to prominence as part of a movement of women painters at Yirrkala who departed from depicting sacred designs in their work. While her figurative works are often biographical, her style moved increasingly into abstract compositions of energetic line work that she referred to as *mayilimiriw* (meaningless). An early adopter of printmaking, working in the medium from 1997, Yunupinju’s highly evolved print works convey a range of styles—from tangled, gestural mark making to convey dynamic scenes to finely detailed small-format etchings, like the ones shown here. The top work is one of her *birrka’mirri*, or “anything paintings,” while the one below, *Bukmak Mulmu*, refers to *mulmu* (grass) all around and in every season. In both works, a kind of abundant togetherness is evoked through the frenetic repetition of marks enjoining to create subtle undulations across the surface—everything together all at once.

## **NYAPANYAPA YUNUPIJU**

1945 - 2021

Clan: Gumatj

TOP AND BOTTOM

*Birrka’mirri* 2011

Etching on Hahnemuhle paper

Collaborator: Basil Hall

Printers: Basil Hall and Natasha Rowell

Gift of Basil Hall, 2023

2023.0006.112

*Bukmak Mulmu* 2011

Etching on Hahnemuhle paper

Collaborator: Basil Hall

Printers: Basil Hall and Natasha Rowell

Gift of Basil Hall, 2023

2023.0006.111



*My father, Djutjatjutja Munungurr, helped establish the homelands at Wāṇḍawuy. And while he was doing it, he was teaching us. He gave us the bark and told us, “You draw the Shark or the fish net or waterspout.” Or he would tell us, “This is a painting of Bol’ṅu, the Thunderman.” And then he would give us the brush, saying, “First, take hold of the brush and start drawing those designs. Second, apply that white clay. And then use hair for the fine brushwork.” This is our ṅanapurru, our inheritance: it belongs to us.*

— Marnnyula Munungurr

The designs in this print are a recurring subject for Marnnyula Munungurr that reference the freshwater at Wāṇḍawuy, a Djapu homeland. The grid pattern in such designs references the topography of Wāṇḍawuy, traversed by a network of billabongs surrounded by ridges and high banks, as well as woven fish traps. Wāṇḍawuy (which translates to “shark head”) is where a fish trap caught the ancestral shark, Māna, before he left his corporeal form. Munungurr is renowned for such finely detailed depictions of clan designs across both print and very small bark paintings often displayed in large arrangements. Munungurr first worked with Basil Hall when he came to help set up the now acclaimed Yolṅurrun Print Space at Buku-Larrṅgay Mulka Centre in Yirrkala, where she was the senior printmaker from its inception in 1995 until 2011. One of her most iconic large-format prints captures scenes of the early days of the print studio in action.

## **MARNNYULA MUNUṄGURR**

Born 1964

Clan: Djapu, Balamumu

*Rapiny Gapu* 2011

Etching on Hähnemuhle paper

Collaborator: Basil Hall

Printers: Basil Hall and Natasha Rowell

Gift of Basil Hall, 2023

2023.0006.114

Across these three prints we see different forms of *Wandjina*—spirits who created the land and Law that are significant to the Ngarinyin, Worrorra, and Wunumbal people, and who are widely depicted at ancient rock-art sites across the Kimberley in the north of Western Australia. Edna Dale is a Ngarinyin woman and chairperson of the Imintji Community. As an artist who paints her culture, she followed in the footsteps of her late father, Jack Dale Mengenen, who would paint and share stories of his traditional homelands around Imintji and Bell Gorge. Dale depicts many *Wandjina* from this Country, giving them a stylized, ethereal, and elongated presence—elements that are amplified in these large-format silkscreens. The first print includes *djalala*—marking stones created by the *Wandjina* that denote sacred sites. The central print shows female *Wandjina* wearing pearl-shell necklaces—objects historically made by saltwater people in the northwest Kimberley and traded far and wide. To create these works, Dale painted acetate sheets that were then sent across the country to Basil Hall’s Canberra studio and made into screens for printing.

## **EDNA DALE**

Born 1983  
Ngarinyin people

LEFT TO RIGHT

*Djalala – Boundary Stones* 2015

Silkscreen on Magnani paper  
Collaborator: Rosie Holmes  
Printer: Clinton Barker  
Gift of Basil Hall, 2023  
2023.0006.764

*Gulawala Wandjinas* 2015

Silkscreen on Magnani paper  
Collaborator: Rosie Holmes  
Printer: Clinton Barker  
Gift of Basil Hall, 2023  
2023.0006.766

*Armalarr* 2015

Silkscreen on Magnani paper  
Collaborator: Rosie Holmes  
Printed by Basil Hall  
Gift of Basil Hall, 2023  
2023.0006.771

Rosella Namok frequently depicts the shifting landscapes and environmental phenomena of her Country—monsoonal rains, tidal patterns, burning grasslands—as well as deep cultural knowledge, such as clan groups and kinship systems. Namok was a member of the Lockhart River Art Gang, a collective of young artists in the Cape York Peninsula in north Queensland, which formed in 1995, creating a dynamic contemporary art movement in the region with an early focus on printmaking. Her mark-making techniques, such as pulling fingers through layers of paint, are derived from seeing her grandmother create drawings in the sand. Similar interplays between different layers, are also achieved in her prints, such as the scratched-away effect we see here. In each of these prints, we see the motifs of Kaapay and Kuyan—two moieties, or “two ways” within Aangkum society, a system of dualities among all things, including plants, animals, people, and places. The visual composition in these prints creates both opposition and balance between the two sides of the picture and the two oval shapes within—each half of a relational partnership.

## **ROSELLA NAMOK**

Born 1979

Kanthanampu and Aangkum

TOP AND BOTTOM

*Kaapay & Kuyan (Old Couple)* 2005

Etching on Hahnemühle paper

Collaborator: Basil Hall

Printer: Monique Auricchio

Gift of Basil Hall, 2023

2023.0006.503

*Kaapay & Kuyan (Young Couple)* 2005

Etching on Hahnemühle paper

Collaborator: Basil Hall

Printer: Monique Auricchio

Gift of Basil Hall, 2023

2023.0006.501

Karen Mills visited Basil Hall for a one-week session at his studio to make their first prints together, including these two. As Mills's painting practice centers around repetitions of gestural marks, she began the process by using her favorite brush marks, which often appear in the underpainting of her works. Here the marks appear lighter and more ethereal, evocative of small stones depicted in trace and shadow. Stones are often referenced in Mills's work, evoking the stone tools and stone flakes of her ancestral homelands in the East Kimberley of Western Australia. Like her paintings featuring a strong use of white space, these prints make use of the color and surface of the paper. Navigating ideas of both enduring connection and the dispossession of Aboriginal peoples, Mills describes her works as "lyrical landscapes of memory" where seemingly abstract interlacing forms are resonant with evocations of history and place. In connection with this exhibition, Karen Mills and Basil Hall will undertake a residency at Kluge-Ruhe to continue their generative collaboration.

## **KAREN MILLS**

Born 1960  
Balanggarra

TOP AND BOTTOM

Untitled 2015

Etching on Hahnemühle paper  
Collaborator: Basil Hall  
Printer: Basil Hall  
Gift of Basil Hall, 2023  
2023.0006.842

Untitled 2015

Etching on Hahnemühle paper  
Collaborator: Basil Hall  
Printer: Basil Hall  
Gift of Basil Hall, 2023  
2023.0006.844

Within Judy Watson's wide-ranging multimedia practice, printmaking has always played a central role. Her early study of lithography has been an enduring influence—her regular use of aquatic effects (such as pooling ink on canvas) was initially inspired by exploring lithographic tusche washes, in which a greasy substance is suspended in water. Both materially and conceptually, her prints often contemplate historical, cultural, and natural residues. Watson has had a long-term collaboration with Basil Hall, often working with him on delicate etchings that layer different visual effects. In these prints, two color plates have been used to create an oscillation between an overall textural wash and stencil-like images. The three shapes in the foreground are based on stupas—hemispherical, Buddhist shrines—which draw upon forms that Watson saw while visiting Sri Lanka and India, that are also suggestive of bell shapes and breasts. The two larger oval “figures” suggest a relational space of exchange. For Watson, such undulating forms, like barrows and mounds, often represent an enduring feminine presence in the landscape and evoke overlapping meanings across cultures.

## **JUDY WATSON**

Born 1959  
Waanyi

LEFT TO RIGHT

*big brown world with three stupas* 2004

Etching on Hahnemühle paper  
Collaborator: Basil Hall  
Printers: Monique Auricchio and Jo Diggins  
Gift of Basil Hall, 2023  
2023.0006.848

*big dark world with three stupas* 2004

Etching on Hahnemühle paper  
Collaborator: Basil Hall  
Printers: Monique Auricchio and Jo Diggins  
Gift of Basil Hall, 2023  
2023.0006.849

A prolific artist known for his vivid, graphic drawings, Kunmanara Yaltangki worked daily at Iwantja Arts in the Indulkana Community in the remote northwest of South Australia. As a largely non-verbal person, Yaltangki's art was a vital means of expression. His works depict a wide cast of creatures and characters drawn from life, imagination, mythology, and pop culture—from sci-fi television shows to rock and roll bands. There are also frequent appearances of Pitjantjatjara *mamu* (spirit beings) as well as his own self-portrait. As in the series shown here, such iconic figures are frequently brought together in animated compositions, as if the picture plane were its own compressed time-space. While such compositions are often densely layered, these printed works instead give sharper focus to each component figure and displayed together they become reminiscent of comic-book panels. The processes used to create these works—etchings with chine collé, then colored with powdered pigments, applied to a backing for a washed effect—sensitively bring out the textures and flows of Yaltangki's mark making.

## **KUNMANARA YALTANGKI**

1973 - 2024

Yankunytjatjara

*Malpa Wiru (Good Friends), 1-9* 2015

Etching with chine collé and pigment on Hahnemühle paper

Collaborator: Beth Conway

Printers: Basil Hall and Rebecca Drew

Gift of Basil Hall, 2023

2023.0006.029.001-3; 2023.0006.029.005-10



Yulyurlu Lorna Napurrula Fencer was a senior Law woman who began her career at Lajamanu in the Northern Territory in 1986 when she was in her sixties. A significant figure in the Central Desert art movement, she became renowned for a distinct, experimental style that captures the energy of natural forms within ancestral stories. Moving to the town of Katherine in the late 1990s, she became a major force at Mimi Aboriginal Art and Craft. Predominant themes for Fencer are the different aspects of the Yam Dreaming Complex—consisting of the *yarla* (big yam), *wapirti* (small yam), and the *yarla-pama* (yam grub or caterpillar). These interrelate within *Jukurrpa* (Law/Dreaming) and the same ecosystem. The prints here show repeated forms of the *wapirti*. The roots and long tubers of the yam are often covered by dotting to create a shimmering effect that evokes the power of the *Jukurrpa*. Fencer traveled to Darwin to work with Basil Hall, where she made a series of small, highly refined etching plates, then printed in different colors to create dynamic variations. In contrast to her densely layered paintings, these prints show a more distilled motif of the *wapirti*, which shines in Fencer’s characteristically vibrant color palette.

## YULYURLU LORNA NAPURRULA FENCER

c. 1920 - 2006  
Warlpiri

*Wapirti, Little White Potato* 2006    *Wapirti, Little White Potato* 2006

Etching on Hahnemühle paper  
Collaborators: Basil Hall and Monique Auricchio  
Printer: Jo Diggins  
Gift of Basil Hall, 2023  
2023.0006.719

Etching on Hahnemühle paper  
Collaborators: Basil Hall and Monique Auricchio  
Printer: Jo Diggins  
Gift of Basil Hall, 2023  
2023.0006.722

*Wapirti, Little White Potato* 2006    *Bush Potato* 2006

Etching on Hahnemühle paper  
Collaborators: Basil Hall and Monique Auricchio  
Printers: Jo Diggins and Merran Sierakowski  
Gift of Basil Hall, 2023  
2023.0006.723

Etching on Hahnemühle paper  
Collaborators: Basil Hall and Monique Auricchio  
Printers: Basil Hall and Natasha Rowell  
Gift of Basil Hall, 2023  
2023.0006.724

Nura Rupert was a *ngangkari* (a traditional healer among Anangu people) who began her artistic career weaving and making *punu* (wood carvings often decorated with a hot poker). She turned to painting and printmaking in her late sixties, frequently depicting a world of animated and mischievous figures, such as *tjitji* (children), *papa* (camp dogs), and various animals. Most frequently, she represented a range of different *mamu* (spooky spirits) who can be seen and dealt with by *ngangkari*. While they are sometimes feared figures in children's stories, Rupert's spirits are not always malevolent, as can be seen in her cheeky, dynamic treatment of them. Rupert was an enthusiastic and regular participant in print workshops, where she readily adapted the style of her figures to different mediums, such as the linocut and etchings of *mamu* seen here. In many ways, her series based on specific figure types is suited to the smaller, serialized nature of print and its crossover with illustration, which allowed Rupert to build up an imaginative cast of lively people, animals, and spirits.

## NURA RUPERT

c. 1933 - 2016  
Pitjantjatjara

*Mamu* 2004

Etching on Hahnemühle paper  
Collaborator: Basil Hall  
Printer: Natasha Rowell  
Gift of Basil Hall, 2023  
2023.0006.187

*Mamu* 2004

Etching with chine collé on  
Hahnemühle paper  
Collaborator: Basil Hall  
Printer: Natasha Rowell  
Gift of Basil Hall, 2023  
2023.0006.186

*Mamu walytja* 2003

Etching on Hahnemühle paper  
Collaborator: Basil Hall  
Printers: Basil Hall, Monique Auricchio,  
Jo Diggins, and Natasha Rowell  
Gift of Basil Hall, 2023  
2023.0006.181

*Mamu kutjara* 2003

Linocut on Magnani paper  
Collaborator: Basil Hall  
Printer: Matthew Ablitt  
Gift of Basil Hall, 2023  
2023.0006.197

Paddy Japaljarri Sims was a Warlpiri elder, community leader, and a founding artist of Warlukurlangu Artists Aboriginal Corporation. He was one of five senior artists who worked on the *Yuendumu Doors*, a series of thirty classroom doors painted with *kuruwarri* (ancestral designs) to teach children about their *Jukurrpa* (Law/Dreaming). Their creation in 1983 marked a formative moment in the Warlpiri art movement. In response, Sims together with Paddy Japaljarri Stewart created an acclaimed series of thirty etchings with Basil Hall (then with Northern Editions) that drew on the same *kuruwarri* as the original doors. Sims then worked with Hall on the portfolio of prints seen here in celebration of his 90th birthday. The repeated motifs in each image represent the *Warlu Jukurrpa* (Fire Dreaming), which is linked to traditional fire burning practices. The central circular forms show *mulju* (water soakages), while the curved lines are the fires lit around them—used to flush out small lizards and mammals for food and to encourage the regrowth of plants. This *Jukurrpa* is associated specifically with hunting *lirringki* (skinks), which is then celebrated with a ceremony on the grounds burnt by the fire.

## **PADDY JAPALJARRI SIMS**

c. 1917 - 2010

Warlpiri

*Warlu Jukurrpa – Fire Dreaming, 90th Birthday Folio Set, 1-4* 2006

Etching on Hahnemühle paper

Collaborator: Basil Hall

Printer: Jo Diggins

Gift of Basil Hall, 2023

2023.0006.482-5

Kumuntjai Napanangka Jack was an acclaimed artist also known for her hunting skills, dancing, and knowledge of traditional Law. Her work often depicts wildflowers, hairstring (thread made from hair), and *tali* (sandhills) with a deft interplay of colorful line work. Another frequent subject is the Country of her birth and her father's *Tjukurrpa* (Dreaming). *Kuruyultu*, close to a small community near Tjukurrla in Western Australia, is a deep waterhole in the mountains where she was born. This work tells the story of her grandfather spearing a wallaby (small marsupial) mother and daughter the night before her birth. They form the central motif of the work surrounded by the undulating linear lines of the sandhills. The bright orange and yellow of this print cause the lines to shine as though bathed in sunlight. Napanangka Jack worked through Ikuntji Artists, an art center that has a longstanding reputation for printmaking, and the story depicted in this work was used as the basis for many textile designs.

## **KUMUNTJAI NAPANANGKA JACK**

1940 - 2022

Luritja, Ngaanyatjarra, and Pintupi

*Kuruyultu* 2021

Etching and relief roll on Hahnemühle paper

Collaborator: Basil Hall

Printer: Basil Hall

Gift of Basil Hall, 2023

2023.0006.411

Kumuntjai Nampitjinpa Dixon was a keen hunter and dancer who traveled widely to participate in women's Law. Her paintings frequently depicted her *Tjukurrpa* (Dreaming), the *Tjilkamala* (porcupine). As in this print, Dixon frequently depicted the rippling *tali tali* (sandhills) of her country near Taalalpi, where she used to travel as a young girl. In between the lines of the *tali tali*, water would collect for the *Tjilkamala* to drink. A layer of light pink beneath bold etched lines and a final silkscreen layer of black combine to create the depths and undulations of this landscape as well as hint at its hidden sustenance. Originally created as a silkscreen for textiles, Basil Hall Editions worked with a portion of the design to create a dynamic and distilled version for an edition on paper. Ikuntji Artists were one of the first art centers to widely adopt screenprinting, which began there in 1992. This practice was revived from 2016 onwards with a particular focus on textile and fashion designs, for which the unique, bold, and iconographic styles of the artists has been uniquely suited.

## **KUMUNTJAI NAMPITJINPA DIXON**

1943 - 2020

Luritja, Pintupi

*Tali Tali (Sandhills)* 2019

Etching and silkscreen on Hahnemühle paper

Collaborator: Basil Hall

Printer: Basil Hall

Gift of Basil Hall, 2023

2023.0006.417

Harry Tjutjuna was a senior Law man, *ngangkari* (traditional healer), and revered artist who worked within the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands. He frequently returned to the subject of the *Wati Wanka* (a spider man and ancestral being) with whom he strongly identified as a *Ngankari*. Often these works would depict the *Minyma wanka tjuta* (a group of female spiders) which are represented by many small, circular marks. In this work, similar circular forms reference the impressions left by young women after sitting on the ground to do *milpatjunanyi* (a traditional way of telling stories by drawing in the sand). The small format of these individual prints and the bold, gestural marks capture something of the scale of seated women and the leaving of ephemeral traces. Tjutjuna was near the end of his career when Basil Hall delivered a print workshop at Ninuku Arts, the art center where Tjutjuna worked. Seated on the ground outside, he rapidly produced a series of plates (for the etched layers) and painted clear plastic acetates (to create stencils for silkscreen printing). These were then able to be rotated and reversed in different arrangements to create a dynamic series that is full of life and movement.

## **HARRY TJUTJUNA**

c. 1930 - 2020  
Pitjantjatjara

*Kungka Tjuta, 1-9* 2017-2018

Etching on Hahnemühle paper (1, 2, 7, 9)

Silkscreen on Hahnemühle paper (5)

Etching and silkscreen on Hahnemühle paper (3, 4, 6, 8)

Collaborators: Basil Hall and Matt Goff

Printer: Basil Hall

Gift of Basil Hall, 2023

2023.0006.344-49; 2023.0006.351-2; 2023.0006.357



# NURA RUPERT

c. 1933 - 2016

Pitjantjatjara

LEFT TO RIGHT

*Kalaya tjuta (many emus)* 2007

Etching on Hahnemühle paper

Collaborator: Basil Hall

Printers: Basil Hall and Jo Diggens

Gift of Basil Hall, 2023

2023.0006.192

*Tjulpu parpakani (flying birds)* 2007

Etching on Hahnemühle paper

Collaborator: Basil Hall

Printers: Basil Hall and Jo Diggens

Gift of Basil Hall, 2023

2023.0006.191

# BULTHIRRIRRI WUNUJMURRA

Born 1981

Dhalwaṅu clan

*Waṅupini* 2022

Natural pigments on ceramic  
Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection  
purchase, 2023  
2023.0008.007

