

EVERYWHEN ART ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

Elizabeth Nyumi



Birth date: 1947

Language: Pintupi

Nyumi was one of the most famous of the second generation of artists of Warlayirti Artists of Balgo. She was born around 1947 and lived at Kururrungku (Billiluna), an outlying community from Balgo. Nyumi's mother belonged to the country of Nynmi (Jupiter well) near Kiwirrkurra on the Pintupi side. Tragically Nyuumi's mothers died quite young from a dingo bite at the Kanari soak water close to Jupiter Well. Her father was from Alyarra in the region of Natajarra.

Nyumi lived a nomadic existence with her family group on the Canning Stock Route before walking into Old Mission with her father after her mother had died. Here she was given clothes and taken to Billiluna and trained as a house worker, cleaning the floors with rags, washing dishes and raking the grounds. She subsequently traveled to many station houses around the region working for the wives of the station owners. As young girl travelling with her older brothers, Brandy and Patrick Tjungurrayi, she encountered a helicopter at Natawalu in 1957. It was the first time Nyumi had seen white men.

Nyumi married a man by the name of Palmer Gordon who became a senior law man of the Billiluna community. Both Nyumi and Palmer taught culture to the children at the school ensuring the traditional dances and songs are kept alive. Nyumi advised the nursing staff at the health clinic about traditional bush medicines and was also knowledgeable about carving coolamons and digging sticks.

Nyumi's paintings are mainly concerned with the country of abundant bush food belonging to her family. In her maturity as a painter she initially worked with a thick brush, covering the canvas in emanating lines in muted tones. Her style then developed to using a multitude of dotting to build up fields of texture but retained her signature motifs of small camps, coolamons and bush tucker trees and scrubs. Nyumi travelled to the Netherlands and to Sydney, Perth, Darwin and Alice Springs for exhibitions of her work which is in the collections of the NGV, AGNSW, AGSA and most other Australian public collections.

She was a vibrant and active member in the community being a strong law and culture woman. Nyumi passed away in 2019.

Solo Exhibitions

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2006 Singing and Dancing up the Country, Raft Gallery, Darwin, NT
2006 Elizabeth Nyumi, Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne, VIC
2005 Elizabeth Nyumi, Aboriginal and Pacific Art Gallery, Sydney, NSW
2004 Elizabeth Nyumi, Raft Artspace, Darwin, NT
2004 Biennale of Sydney, Sydney, NSW
2003 Elizabeth Nyumi, Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne, VIC
2002 Elizabeth Nyumi, Aboriginal and Pacific Art Gallery, Sydney, NSW
2001 Parwalla, Raft Artspace, Darwin, NT

Group Exhibitions

2017 20/20 A Sense Of Place, Everywhen Artspace, Mornington Peninsula, VIC
2016 Spring Salon, Everywhen Artspace, Mornington Peninsula, VIC
2015 Warlayirti Artists, Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair, Darwin
2014 Warlayirti: The Art of Balgo RMIT Gallery, Melbourne
2014 Fremantle Arts Centre Print Award, Fremantle
2014 Warlayirti Artists, Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair, Darwin
2014 Balgo 14, Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne
2014 Yaninpala Yirwarrawanna Kutjupa Ngurrarrakutu – Walking the Path, Nomad Art, Darwin
2014 Balgo: Past & Present, Cooe Gallery, Sydney
2014 Summer Collectors Show, Susan McCulloch, Mornington Peninsula
2013-14 In Print 20/20, Celebrating 20 years of prints & printmaking, Charles Darwin University Art Collection & Northern Editions Printmaking Studio
2013 Convergence, Warlayirti Artists @ Short St Gallery, Broome
2013 Kuralka Tjanu Tjukurrpa: Kuwarri Marr Ku (Old Stories: New Ceations). Northern Edistions, Nan Giese Gallery, Darwin Festival Exhibition, NT
2013 Warlayirti Artists, Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair, Darwin
2013 Warlayirti Artists, Desert Mob Exhibition, Alice Springs
2013 Re-generation, Susan McCulloch, Melbourne
2013 Seoul Open Arts Fair, Korea. (Group Exhibition via Desart, Alice Springs.)
2013 Balgo Survey, Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne
2013 Fresh, McCulloch & McCulloch, Salt Contemporary Queenscliff, Vic
2013 Nora Wompi & Friends, Suzanne O'Connell, Brisbane
2012-13: Gestuelles – The Art of Transmission by Aboriginal Desert Women, IDAIA – International Development for Australian, Indigenous Art, Alliances Francaises in Australia.
2012 Watermark - the Signature of Life, IDAIA, Hong Kong
2012 Warlayirti Artists, Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair, Darwin
2012 Warlayirti Artists, Desert Mob Exhibition, Alice Springs
2012 Warlayirti Artists, Artkelch Pro Community, Freiburg, Grassi Museum Leipzig, Fabrik Der Kunste, Hamburg and Galerie Gunzoburg Bodensee (Lake Constance), Germany
2012 Balgo 2012, Gallery Gbbrielle Pizzi, Melbourne
2012 Luminous World: Contemporary Art from the Wesfarmers Collection, touring exhibition, Western Australia Art Gallery
2011 Balgo – 2011, Redot Gallery, Singapore
2011 Balgo 2011, Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne
2011 Desert Mob, Araluen Centre, Alice Springs, NT
2010 Balgo Survey, Rheinfelden/Baden, Haus Salmegg, Coolamon Aboriginal Art Gallery Schopfheim, Germany
2010 Balgo Survey, ReDot Gallery, Singapore
2010 Ingalimpa Tjuntu - Singing Songs - We Sing the Country and that's how we find the way', ReDot Fine Art Galleries, Audi Forum Building, Tokyo

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2010 Balgo Prints, Northern Editions, Darwin
2009 'Desert Aboriginal Acrylic Painting: Tradition, Boldness and Colour Explosion', Novotel Darling Harbour
2009 Mixed Show, Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne
2008 Balgo Survey, ReDot Gallery, Singapore
2008 Balgo 2008, Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne
2008 Mixed Show, Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne
2007 Survey, They Might Be Giants, Woolloongabba Art Gallery, Brisbane, QLD
2006 Balgo 2006, Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne, VIC
2006 Recent Works, Short St Gallery, Broome, WA
2006 Balgo Survey Show, ReDot Gallery, Singapore
2006 Warlayirti Suite Print Exhibition, Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne, VIC
2006 Survey, Scott Livesey Art Dealer, Melbourne, VIC
2006 Desert Mob, Araluen Centre for Arts, Alice Springs, NT
2005 Balgo 2005, Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne, VIC
2005 Glass from the Sand Country, Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne, VIC
2004 Desert Mob, Araluen Centre for Arts, Alice Springs, NT
2004 Recent Works, Short St Gallery, Broome, WA
2004 21st NATSIAA, Museum and Art Gallery of NT, Darwin, NT
2004 Balgo a Go Go, Grantpirrie, Sydney, NSW
2004 Biennale of Sydney, Sydney, NSW
2004 Balgo 4-04, Warlayirti Artists, Balgo, WA
2003 Eight by Three, Scott Livesey Art Dealer, Melbourne, VIC
2003 Desert Mob, Araluen Centre for Arts, Alice Springs, NT
2003 20th NATSIAA, Museum and Art Gallery of NT, Darwin, NT
2003 Purtatjanirri Kamu Warrmala, Framed Gallery, Darwin, NT
2003 Balgo Brilliance, Art Mob, Hobart, TAS
2003 Palya Minyirri, Thornquest Gallery, Gold Coast, QLD
2002 30th Alice Prize, Araluen Centre, Alice Springs, NT
2002 Balgo Hills, Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne, VIC
2002 Desert Mob, Araluen Centre, Alice Springs, NT
2002 Balgo Hills, Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne, VIC
2002 Desert Mob, Araluen Centre, Alice Springs, NT
2002 Art from Balgo, Gallery Gondwana, Alice Springs, NT
2002 Balgo Hills: An artist's survey, Hogarth Galleries, Sydney, NSW
2002 Balgo Hills Artists 2002, Art Mob, Aboriginal Fine Art, Hobart, TAS
2002 Big Colour My Country, Thornquest Gallery, Gold Coast, QLD
2001 Aborigena Arte, Australiana Contemporaneu, Torino, Palazzo Bricherasio, Italy
2001 Desert Mob, Araluen Centre, Alice Springs, NT
2001 18th NATSIAA, Museum and Art Gallery of NT, Darwin, NT
2001 Kutjungka, Bett Gallery, Hobart, TAS
2001 Balgo Works, Staedtische Gallery, Wolsfburg, Germany
2001 Recent Works by Artists from Balgo Hills, Ochre Gallery, Melbourne, Vic
2001 Balgo Artists Return to Country, Vivien Anderson Gallery, Melbourne, Vic
2001 Spirituality and Australian Aboriginal Art, Alcaston Gallery, Madrid, Spain
2001 Past Modern: an exhibition of Kimberley Landscapes, Short Street Gallery @ Australia Square, Sydney, NSW
2000 This Earth for Us, Australia Dreaming at the Commonwealth Institute, Bristol/Edinburgh, UK
2000 The Westside: Images in Ochre and Colour, Coe-ee II Exhibiting Gallery, Yuwayi Art Precinct, World Square, Sydney, NSW
2000 Balgo Hills, Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne, VIC
2000 17th NATSIAA, Museum and Art Gallery of NT, Darwin, NT

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2000 Melbourne Artfair 2000, Royal Exhibition Building, Melbourne, VIC
2000 Waltja Family, Hogarth Galleries, Sydney, NSW
2000 Fifth National Indigenous Heritage Art Award & the Art of Place, Old Parliament House, Canberra, ACT
2000 Balgo Art, Gondwana Gallery, Alice Springs, NT
2000 Balgo Hills Aboriginal Paintings, Bett Gallery, Hobart, TAS
2000 Aboriginal Art, Galerie Baehr, Leverkusen, Germany
2000 Aboriginal Art, Galerie Baehr, Dormagen, Germany
1999 16th NATSIAA, Museum and Art Gallery of NT, Darwin, NT
1999 Mularrpa (True) Balgo, Framed, the Darwin Gallery, Darwin, NT
1999 Miliynyin, Hogarth Galleries, Sydney, NSW
1999 Miliynyin, Japingka Gallery, Fremantle, WA
1998 Ngurrara: My own Country, Hogarth Galleries, Sydney, NSW
1998 15th NATSIAA, Museum and Art Gallery of NT, Darwin, NT
1997 Gallery Gondwana, Alice Springs, NT
1997 Balgo Paintings, Seywald Gallery, Salzburg, Austria
1997 New Paintings from Balgo Artists, Vivien Anderson Gallery, Melbourne, VIC
1997 14th NATSIAA, Museum and Art Gallery of NT, Darwin, NT
1997 New Painting by Balgo Women, Vivien Anderson Gallery, Melbourne, VIC
1997 Dreamings: Aboriginal kunst uit Australie, Eusebius, Arnhem, The Netherlands
1993 Wirrimanu: the Art of Balgo Hills, Coe-ee Aboriginal Art Gallery, Sydney, NSW
1992 Warlayirti Artists' Homelands, Coe-ee Aboriginal Art Gallery, Sydney, NSW
1990 Songlines: Paintings from Balgo Hills, Rebecca Hossack Gallery, London, UK
1989 Warlayirti Artists: Continuing Links with Land, Coe-ee Aboriginal Art Gallery, Sydney, NSW

Collections

National Gallery of Australia
National Gallery of Victoria
Art Gallery of Western Australia
Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory
Artbank
The Holmes a Court Collection
Morven Estate
Helen Read Collection
Harland Collection
Aboriginal Art Museum, Utrecht, The Netherlands
The Laverty Collection

Bibliography

Who's Who of Australian Women, 2006, 2007. Bahr, Crown Content Pty Ltd, Melbourne
Bahr, E., (ed), 2000, The Unseen in Seen, exhibition catalogue, Aboriginal Art Gallery Bahr, Speyer, Germany
Carlos, I., (ed), 2004, On Reason and Emotion, exhibition catalogue, Biennale of Sydney Ltd, Sydney
Cowan, J., 1999, Balgo - New Directions, Gordon & Breach Arts International Limited (Craftsman House, Sydney)
Cowan, J., 1994, Wirrimanu - Aboriginal Art from Balgo Hills, Gordon & Breach Arts International Limited (Craftsman House, Sydney)
Johnson, V., 1994, The Dictionary of Western Desert Artists, Craftsman House, East Roseville, NSW
Kleinert, S. & Neale M., (eds), 2000, The Oxford Companion to Aboriginal Art & Culture, Oxford University Press, South Melbourne

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Watson, C., 2003, Piercing the Ground, Fremantle Arts Centre Press, Fremantle

Watson, C., 1999, 'Touching the Land', Art from the Land, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia

West, M., (ed), 2001, Telstra presents the 18th National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award,

exhibition catalogue, Museum & Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin Williamson, S. & Togni, S., 2004

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