

EVERYWHEN ART

ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

Wukun Wanambi



Birth date: 1962

Birth place: East Arnhem Land, NT

Language: Yolngu

Wukun's father, Mithili Wanambi, died before he was able to learn from him to any great degree. He began painting in 1997 as a result of the Saltwater project in which he participated. His arm of the Marrakulu clan is responsible for the saltwater imagery which had not been painted extensively since his father's death in 1981. His caretakers, or Djunggayi, principally the late Yanggarriny Wunungmurra (1932 - 2003), transferred their knowledge of these designs to Wukun so that the title to saltwater could be asserted. Some of these designs were outside even his father's public painting repertoire.

Wukun's sister's Boliny and Ralwurrandji were active artists for a long time before this but not painting oceanic waters of Marrakulu. Wukun sought education through Dhupuma College and Nhulunbuy High School and mainstream employment as a Sport and Rec Officer, Probation and Parole Officer and at the local mine. He has five children with his wife Warraynga, who is also an artist. He is also now a grandfather. It was not until 2007 that their younger brother Yalanba began to paint.

Wukun's first bark for this Saltwater project won the 1998 NATSIAA Best Bark award. Wukun has gone on to establish a high profile career.

In the 2003 NATSIA Awards, a sculptured Larrakitj by Wukun was Highly Commended in the 3D category. Since then he has been included in many prestigious collections. He had his first solo show at Raft Artspace in Darwin in 2004, followed by solo shows at Niagara Galleries, Melbourne in 2005 and 2008.

Wukun has been heavily involved in all the major communal projects of this decade, including the Sydney Opera House commission, the opening of the National Museum of Australia, the Wukidi ceremony in the Darwin Supreme Court and the films, *Lonely Boy Richard*, *The Pilot's Funeral* and *Dhakiyarr Versus the King*. Wukun is an active community member in recreation and health projects and supports a large family.

IN 2007, he became Director of Buku Larrnggay's media centre, the Mulka Project. In this role he facilitates media projects such as Nhama DVD and mentors young Yolngu in accessing training and employment in the media centre. In 2008, he was commissioned to provide a design for installation on a seven-story glass facade in the Darwin waterfront Development. In 2018 he was the winner of the Wandjuk Marika 3D award at the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award for a multi media work featuring larrakitj and film.

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Exhibitions

2021 Northern Waters, Short Street Gallery, Broome, WA
2021 art Karlsruhe 2021, ARTKELCH, Karlsruhe, Germany
2019 Water, QAGOMA, Brisbane, QLD
2019 Gurrutu, Tarnanthi 2019, AGSA, Adelaide, SA
2019 Balnnhdurr- A Lasting Impression, Whitlam Institute Gallery UWS, NSW
2019 Balnnhdurr- A Lasting Impression, Cowra Regional Gallery, Cowra, NSW
2019 Top End Ochre, Everywhen Artspace, Mornington Peninsula, VIC
2019 Wanambi, Aboriginal and Pacific Art, Sydney, NSW
2018 35th NATSIAA Finalist, MAGNT , Darwin (winner 3 D award)
2017 Wynne Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, NSW
1998 National Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Darwin, NT
2010 'White', Short St Gallery, Broome, WA
2009 'Larrakitj', Kerry Stokes Collection, West Australian Art Gallery, Perth, WA
2009 'After Berndt - Etchings from Drawings', Indigenart, Subiaco, WA
2008 'Outsid Inside - Bark and hollow logs from Yirrkala', Bett Gallery, Hobart, Tasmania
2008 'Yarpany - Honey, Bark and hollow logs of the Marrakulu clan', Framed Gallery, Darwin, NT
2008 Gapan Gallery, Garma Festival, NT
2008 Galaku Gallery, Darwin Festival NT
2008 'Wukun Wanambi', Niagara Galleries, Melbourne, Victoria
2007 Galaku Gallery, Festival of Darwin, NT
2007 'Bukulunthunmi - Coming Together, One Place', Raft Artspace, Darwin, NT
2006 TOGA NT Contemporary Art Award, Parliament House, Darwin, NT
2006 Telstra National Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Darwin, NT
2006 'Walking Together to Aid Aboriginal Health', Shalom College, UNSW
2006 'Bulayi - Small Gems', Suzanne O'Connell Gallery, Brisbane
2006 'Arnhem Land Ochres', Mina Mina Art Gallery, Brunswick Heads
2005 'Yakumirri', Raft Artspace, Darwin, NT
2005 National Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Darwin, NT
2005 'Yakumirri', Holmes a Court Gallery, Perth, WA
2005 'Artbank: Celebrating 25 years of Australian Art'
2004 'Wukun Wanambi', Niagara Galleries, Melbourne, Victoria
2003 Brighton International Art Festival, UK
2003 'Larrakitj', Rebecca Hossack Gallery
2003 National Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Darwin, NT
2002 National Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Darwin, NT
2001 National Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Darwin, NT
2001 'New from Old', Annandale Galleries, Sydney, NSW
1998 - 2001 Saltwater

Collections

MAGNT
ANMM
Sydney Opera House
Kerry Stokes Collection
NT Supreme Court - Wukudi
South Australian Art Gallery
National Gallery of Australia Art Gallery of NSW
Holmes a Court Collection Artbank

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Manly Regional Gallery Musee de Lyon, France
Colin and Liz Laverty, Sydney
Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney

Awards

1998- Best Bark NATSIAA

2003- Highly Commended (3D Work) NATSIAA

2006- Selected for the TOGA NT Contemporary Art Award exhibition

2006- Alcan commision for limited edition platter

2007- Winner, People's Choice, TogArt Contemporary Art Award, NT

2010- Wandjuk Marika Memorial 3D Award, NATSIAA, MAGNT Darwin.

2018- Winner -35th NATSIAA Wandjuk Marika Memorial 3D Award. MAGNT, Darwin