



LYDIA BALBAL
Little Bit Long Way



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2 – 25 May 2024

Opening Celebration, Thursday 2 May, 5 – 7pm

I'm painting underground. What's underground.

Upside down: water, rockholes, lines beneath the sand-dunes. – Lydia Balbal

On a day like any other Lydia Balbal walked into Broome's Short St Gallery and announced in brisk, determined fashion, that the time had come for her to paint. Gallerist Emily Rohr says "Lydia is extremely free," she continues "unconstrained in her art – she throws it right open – and that links to her tremendous, anarchic temperament ... She translates what she knows in a new way. She's not just making tight, precise designs. Her expression becomes operatic: even a small patch of colour in her work has a vastness."

Lydia Balbal is a *Mangala* woman who began painting in 2007. Her country is near Punmu in the Great Sandy Desert of Western Australia. Threatened by severe drought her people left their traditional country and her family were some of the last to walk out to the coastal town of *Bidyadanga* (then La Grange Mission) located two hours south of Broome in the 70s.

In this series of works Balbal explores *jila* (living water) located near the Percival Lakes in the Great Sandy Desert in Western Australia. It is an important gathering of the *Yulparija* and neighbouring groups where they would come together for rain making ceremonies. Other works in the collection highlight *martakulu*, a soak out near Punmu near the Canning Stock Route. This is strong woman's Country and part of the women's law line.

*Long time ago a law man he come up to this country, he went home and left his wife and baby.
They make him fire and sit down, cook mayi (bush food) and then started to cry for her husband.*

Her tears made that soak. It is important country this one. – Lydia Balbal

These paintings are rendered with shimmering desert hues and softer saltwater colours. The artworks reveal the long distances Balbal had to walk to reach the oasis of the coast, *Little Bit Long Way*. The gentle washes of white and pink are at one time strikingly vast and profoundly intimate.

Lydia Balbal is a highly regarded Bidyadanga artists whose works feature in the collections of the Western Australian Art Gallery, Queensland Art Gallery, National Gallery of Victoria, National Gallery of Australia, Parliament House Collection, Artbank & the Laverty Collection. Balbal has exhibited extensively in Australia, France, China, Spain, England, Belgium, Italy and America. This exhibition is presented in collaboration with Short St Gallery in Broome.

Winpa (LBAL841521)

acrylic on linen

122 x 123 cm

\$9,000



Winpa (LBAL841519)

acrylic on linen

122 x 183.5 cm

\$12,000



Martakulu (LBAL841515)

acrylic on linen

126.5 x 76.5 cm

\$7,000



Martakulu (LBAL841512)

acrylic on linen

138 x 140 cm

\$9,800



Martakulu (LBAL841507)

acrylic on linen

138 x 90 cm

\$7,500



Martakulu (LBAL841506)

acrylic on linen

120 x 146 cm

\$9,500



Martakulu (LBAL841488)

acrylic on linen

150 x 102 cm

\$9,000



Martakulu (LBAL841482)

acrylic on linen

104 x 133 cm

\$8,000



Martakulu (LBAL841474)

acrylic on linen

150 x 181 cm

\$14,500



Wirnpa (LBAL841463)

acrylic on linen

71 x 154 cm

\$7,000



Wirnpa (LBAL841462)

acrylic on linen

122 x 81.5 cm

\$7,000



Wirnpa (LBAL841461)

acrylic on linen

101 x 71 cm

\$5,800



Wirnpa (LBAL841460)

acrylic on linen

100 x 60 cm

\$5,600



Wirnpa (LBAL841458)

acrylic on linen

74.5 x 68.5 cm

\$3,000

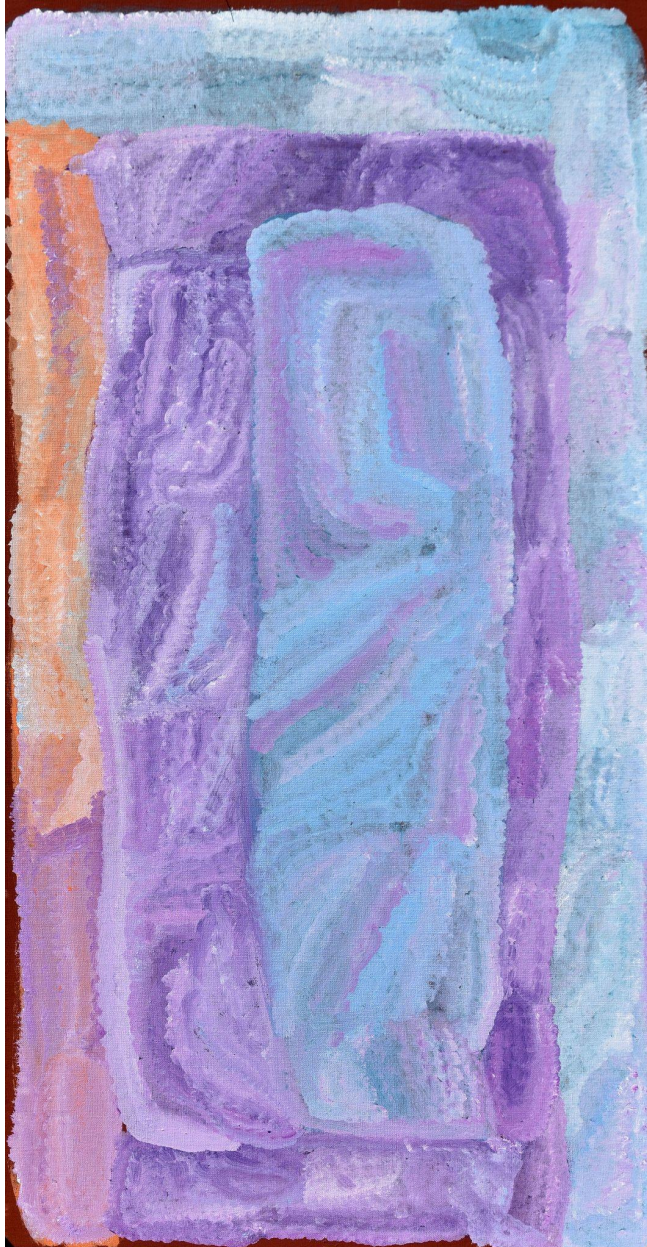


Martakulu (LBAL841444)

acrylic on linen

92 x 46 cm

\$2,900



Wirnpa (LBAL841457)

acrylic on linen

70 x 45 cm

\$2,500



Martakulu (LBAL841449)

acrylic on linen

81 x 184 cm

\$9,000



Wirnpa (LBAL841455)

acrylic on linen

117 x 82 cm

\$7,000



Martakulu (LBAL841442)

acrylic on linen

137.5 x 91 cm

\$7,500



Martakulu (LBAL841431)

acrylic on linen

123 x 102 cm

\$7,500



Martakulu (LBAL841430)

acrylic on linen

98.5 x 81.5 cm

\$6,000



LYDIA BALBAL

Born Western Australia, 1958

Mangala Language

AWARDS, GRANTS & RESIDENCIES

- 2024 Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award, Museum and Art Gallery of Northern Territory, NT, Finalist
- 2017 Hedland Art Awards, Courthouse Gallery, Port Hedland, WA
- 2011 Hedland Art Awards, Courthouse Gallery, Port Hedland, WA
- 2010 Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award, Museum and Art Gallery of Northern Territory, NT, Finalist
Royal Scottish Bank Emerging Art Award, Selected Finalist, Sydney NSW
- 2009 Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award, Museum and Art Gallery of Northern Territory, NT, Finalist
- 2008 Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award, Museum and Art Gallery of Northern Territory, NT, Finalist

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2024 'Little Bit Long Way', Arthouse Gallery, Sydney, NSW
- 2017 'Underground', Short St Gallery, Broome, WA
'Mangala Woman: Lydia Balbal', AirSpace Gallery, Sydney, NSW
- 2013 'Pikarong: King Brown Country', William Mora Galleries, Melbourne, VIC
- 2012 'Lydia Balbal/Strong Woman Country, IDAIA – International Development of Australian Indigenous Art, Paris
- 2010 'Piti', Outstation Gallery, Darwin, NT
- 2009 Aboriginal and Pacific Art Gallery, Sydney NSW
- 2008 'Salt Lake Country', Short St Gallery, Broome, WA
William Mora Galleries, Melbourne, VIC

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2023 Voir L'Invisible, Musee d'Angoulême, France
- 2023 Pink is Punk – Short St Gallery, Broome, WA
- 2022 Monument of Remembrance – Aboriginal art from Australia, Belgium Chocolate Village Museum in partnership with
Aboriginal Signature Estrangin Gallery, Belgium
- 2019 From the Desert to the Sea: a Journey with the Yulparitja, Aboriginal Signature Estrangin Gallery, Brussels
- 2018 Le Pley Collection, Residence of the Australian Ambassador, Beijing, China
- 2017 Songs of a Secret Country, Kluge-Ruhe Art Gallery, University of Virginia,
Desert Colour, Talapi, Alice Springs, NT
Electric, Harvey Arts Projects, USA
- 2016 Parcours des Mondes, Estragin Fine Art, Paris, France

LYDIA BALBAL

- 2015 OFF COURSE Art Fair, Brussels, Belgium
- 2014 Saltwater Soul Desert Heart, Short St Gallery Broome, WA
Country to Coast; Colours of the Kimberley, Aboriginal Art Museum – Utrecht, curated by Georges Petitjean
Dreamings: Arte Aborigena Australiana incontra de Chirico (Aboriginal Australian art meets De Chirico), Museo Carlo Bilotti, Villa Borghese, Rome, Memoires vives. Une Historie de art Abridge, Musee d'Acquaine – Bordeaux
- 2013 Women's Show, Vivien Anderson Gallery, Victoria
West of Well 33: Yaama Ganu Gallery, Sydney
- 2012 Luminous, World Contemporary Art from the Wesfarmers Collection, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth WA
WaterMark, the Signature of Life, IDAIA- International Development of Australian Indigenous Art, The Space, Hong Kong
Luminescences: The Colour of Bidyadanga, Harvey Art Projects, Idaho, USA
Jan Billycan; Lydia Balbal, Arthouse Gallery, Sydney, NSW
Un-acclimatised, Monash University Museum of Art at Switchback Gallery, Melbourne, VIC
Round and Round in that Rockhole, Short St Gallery, Broome, WA
- 2011 Aboriginal Art, ININTI in collaboration with IDAIA, International Development for Australian Indigenous Art, Madrid, Spain
Australian Aboriginal Art: Painting from the Deserts, ININTI in collaboration with IDAIA, Madrid, Spain
Shalom Gamarada Ngijani Yana Art Fair 2011, Sydney, NSW
Summer Haze, JGM Galleries, London, UK
Pearls, Paint; Ilma, Aratong Galleries, Australian High Commission, Singapore
Remix, WA Contemporary Art, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, WA
Kirriwirri, Aboriginal and Pacific Art Gallery, Sydney, NSW
Green, Outstation Gallery, Darwin, NT
Bidyadanga Recent Paintings, Chapman Gallery, Canberra ACT
- 2010 Bidyadanga Artists, Harvey Arts Projects, SunValley, Idaho, USA
Melbourne Art Fair, Royal Exhibition Building – Short St Gallery & William Mora Galleries present the Yulparija artists
White, Short St Gallery, Broome, WA
- 2009 Short on Size, Short St Gallery, Broome, WA
- 2008 Bidyadanga Art Show, AP Bond Art, Adelaide, SA
From Desert to Saltwater, Booker-Lowe Gallery, Houston Texas, USA

SELECTED COLLECTIONS

Murdoch University Art Collection Aboriginal Art Museum, Thomas Vroom Collection, National Gallery of Victoria Felton Collection, Queensland Art Gallery, Laverty Collection, Artbank, Monash University Art Collection, Lepley Collection, Western Australian Art Gallery, National Gallery of Australia, Wesfarmers Collection, Australia Parliament House Collection, Brocard – Estrangin Collection, Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection of the University of Virginia



Yulparija on Country, photograph courtesy of Short St Gallery

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ARTHOUSE
GALLERY