



**NGANAMPA
KAMPATJANGKA
UNNGU**

BENEATH THE CANVAS

THE LIVES AND STORIES OF THE TJALA ARTISTS

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TJALA ARTS
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FOREWORD

HECTOR TJUPURU BURTON

Australia is only a little bit of sand on the map of the world.

When us mob we talk, we talk Pitjantjatjara. At Warakurna they have the same language – Ngaanyatjarra and it's a bit different to the language of another country, Docker River. They speak Luritja in Papunya. All these places have different languages; Papunya and Yuendumu. It might be that Darwin's got another language; they call Anangu Yolngu – top end language.

There are lots of places; America's got big land – north, south, east and west – and there's Germany, Europe and other places too.

We're staying in the little bit – Australia – and then there are other places and water everywhere else.

All of that big water and the world are coming from *Tjukurpa* (Dreaming) and God.



In partnership with Paul Eckert from Indigenous Scripture Support, I've chosen the first four verses of the Bible – Genesis 1:1–4 to share with you:

Kuwaripatjara mulapa Godalu ilkari munu manta palyanu uwankara wiyangka. Palu manta uwankara ultu ngarangi, ka uru kutju tjiwariwari ngarangi pulka mulapa, ka mungawalurungku tjutuningi. Ka Godaku kurunpa para-ngarangi urungka katuwanu. Palulanguru Godalu wangkangu, 'Kalalari!' Ka kalalaringu. Ka kalalarinyangka nyakula Godanya pukularingu wiru mulapa ngaranyangka. Munu paluru mungawaluru munu kalala titutitunu.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and empty, and darkness covered the deep waters. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters. Then God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light. And God saw that the light was good. Then he separated the light from the darkness.

Following is Hector's prayer which reflects on the above Bible passage.

Uwa, nganana mukuringanyi, Mama, Tjukurpa pala palunyalanya utinma. Kala nintingkula Bible uwankara nyakula nyuntu nintinku utinnyangka palyanma, Mama. Wiru nyuntu pulka mulapalta nintinu nganananya. Panya Tjukurpa mungawaluru nyuntu nyinanytja kalala pala. Kalala pala palumpala mukuringanyi, kalalangka nyinanytjikitja, kalalangka nyuntu utinnyangka Tjukurpa pala palumpa nintingkunyitjikitja. Pukultju pulkanku nganananya kuwari nintinu munu pulka nyuntu utintja, Tjukurpa palya tjuṯa, nyuntumpa wangka tjuṯa. Kala wangka nyuntumpa uti kanyinma kalala wirunya. Nyangatjana nyuntula ini miilmiilta iningka tjapini, aamin.

Father, we want you to reveal this *Tjukurpa* to us, so that understanding it and all of what we see in the Bible we may act upon it, as you reveal it to us, Father. You have shown us truly great and wonderful things, not the least being this creation of light out of darkness. We want that light, to be in that light, that wisdom that you have revealed – that's what we want to know and understand. With great kindness you have shown us many things, revealed great things and perfect wisdom contained in your words. We must keep your words, this wonderful light. I humbly ask these things in the holy name [of Jesus]. Amen.

LEFT: *New York Times*, Front page. Wednesday, February 13, 2008. Left to right: Hector Tjupuru Burton, Graham Kulyuru, Ronnie Douglas, Leonard Burton.

OPPOSITE PAGE: Hector Tjupuru Burton. Tjala Arts, 2012.





TIGER PALPATJA

When I was a young fella I painted with good eyes, now my eyesight is failing I can only work a little bit. My eyes are gone, I can only see with one eye.

Get my paints. I'm painting a new waterhole, in sand dunes. My mother used to drink from that waterhole and I drank from there too. It's not Piltati; it's another place. I've painted this, my place, and sold it.

All the young women were happy in the sand dunes. Not the Seven Sisters, but real women. At Piltati the creek bed goes this way. The *wanampi* (water snake) looks after that place, it's his home. That road goes past Piltati to Nyapari and there's another waterhole below Piltati. I know that creek bed at Piltati, it's the home of the *wanampi* water snake. Some other places of the *wanampi* are sacred.

My eyes are so bad, I might walk into tree branches; I can't do other work. I just like to paint. Get my painting! I want to paint another painting. I'm painting a red *wanampi* of my home place Piltati.

I want to go home to my *ngura*, the country of my spirit. It's an important place. I was born there. I want to go and sit down in my home country. That is why I paint like this. My waterhole is long inside.

I'm now busy painting.

[He sits quietly absorbed in his painting. Trying to reach the far corner with his paintbrush dripping red paint.]

Move it around . . . Yes, yes.

[Tiger paints a red circle.]

This is a little waterhole that lies this side of Piltati, it also has a *wanampi*.

When I was little I lived in the bush. We used to go to a place with big sand dunes. Beautiful sand dunes that all the kids played on!

[He laughs.]

The above was a combination of two sittings on the same day with Mr Palpatja. He passed away in early 2012.

TOP: Tiger decorated for *inma*, Amata 1998. Ara Irititja: Stewart Roper Collection (AI-0020872-001).

BOTTOM: Tiger Palpatja speaks to his work *Wanampi Tjukurpa*, (2007). Acrylic on linen, 1220 x 1220 mm. Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne, 2008. (782-07)

OPPOSITE PAGE: Tiger Palpatja, *Wanampi Tjukurpa*, 2011. Acrylic on linen, 1220 x 1980 mm. Private collection. (020-11)







I JUST LIKE TO PAINT.

OPPOSITE PAGE: Tiger with sisters Iluwanti Ken (left) and Mary Pan.
Outside Tjala Arts, 2010.





Sylvia Ken, *Seven Sisters*, 2011. Acrylic on linen, 1970 x 1980 mm.
Private collection. (050-11)





I sometimes travelled around to places with NPY Women's Council. One time, coming back from Docker River, the Toyota rolled. It was slippery, wet and raining and I ended up on the top of the Toyota, poor me. I had to go to hospital and stay till I got better. That's why I have trouble with my two knees.

I've worked at Nyapari and here in Amata. I like working here. I went to Alice Springs once to do some painting and I didn't get any money. A tall thin man with a hair cut like *minyma piranpa* (white lady), pushed me to come in, what was his name? I painted lovely

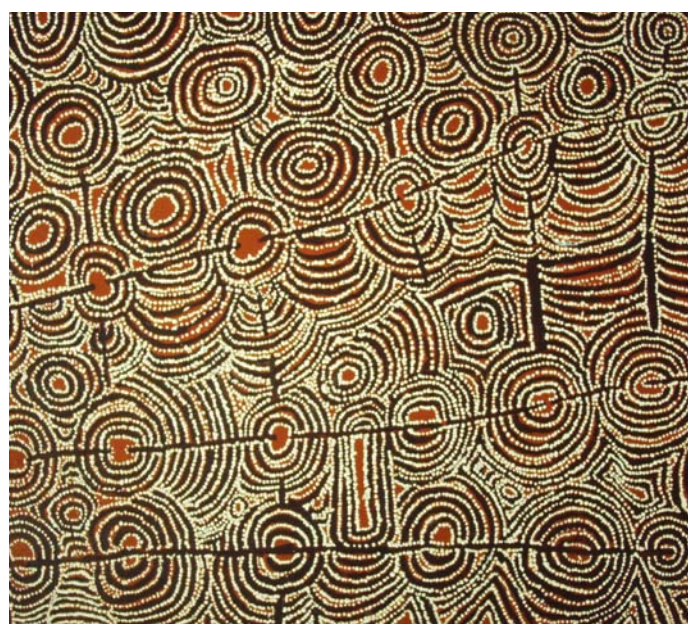
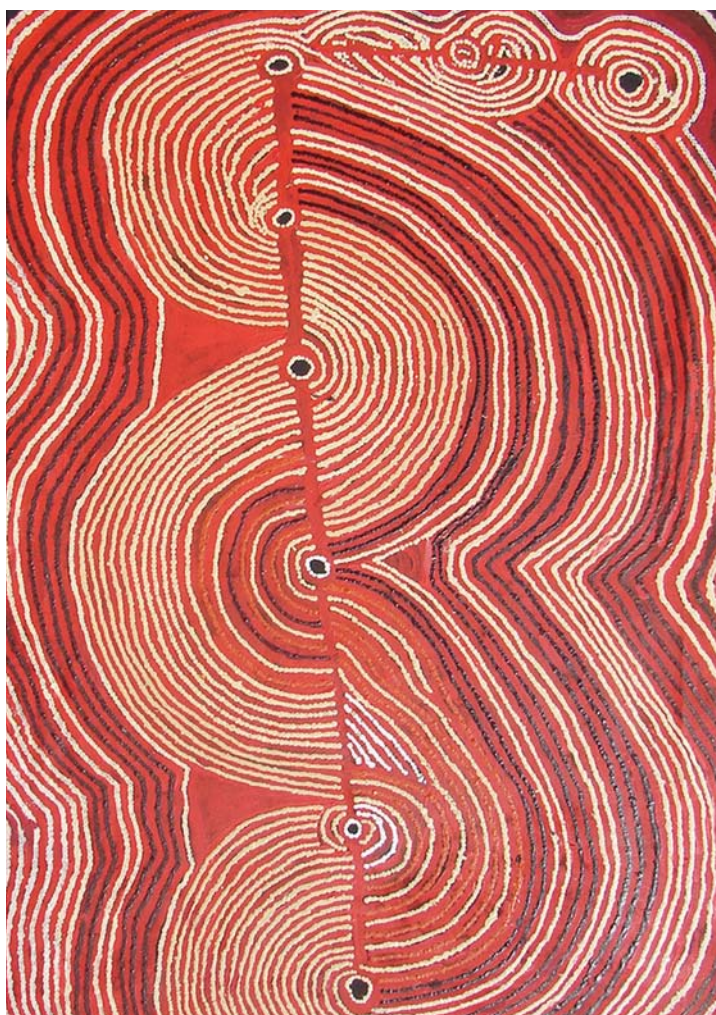
big canvases and got no money. He promised me that my work would sell in Sydney and Melbourne for big money. I waited one month, two, three months and nothing, no money.

TOP: Ruby Williamson with granddaughter Gina, in front of her canvas *Uttukunpa (Honey Grevillea)*, 2011. Acrylic on linen, 1970 x 1980 mm. Private collection. Tjala Arts, 2011. (391-11)

BOTTOM: Ruby Williamson (right) and Wawiriya Burton working on their collaborative canvas. Tjala Arts, 2011.







TOP LEFT: Hector Tjupuru Burton, *Anumara Tjukurpa*, 2011. Acrylic on linen, 1970 x 1980 mm. Art Gallery of South Australia. (148-11)

TOP RIGHT: Hector Tjupuru Burton, *Anumara Tjukurpa*, 2010. Acrylic on linen, 1220 x 1980 mm. Private collection. (032-10)

BOTTOM LEFT: Hector Tjupuru Burton, *Anumara Tjukurpa*, 2009. Acrylic on linen, 1525 x 1015 mm. Private collection. (315-09)

BOTTOM RIGHT: Hector Tjupuru Burton, *My Father's Country*, 2003. Acrylic on linen, 1220 x 1015 mm. Private collection. (430-03)

HECTOR'S OBSERVATIONS

CAMELS

When I saw camels for the first time I was thinking, I don't believe what I see! How did these big camels and horses get here?

The white man showed the Anangu men how to ride those camels. Some Anangu men had already learnt before how to ride them. I saw how these men ride the camels, going back and forward, up and down, and not falling off. And I was thinking, how do they jump on that really big camel? They weren't frightened of these big camels.

CARS

The first time I rode in a car was when a white fella named Mr Walter told me to 'jump in' an old truck, and I did and then it was moving, the tree was moving, the sand was moving, everything was moving fast. My head was spinning, but I was feeling so good. I was thinking this is really strange. When he stopped that car I jumped out. I was holding on tight, a bit scared. When I got out from that car I was feeling different, like drunk, sick.

PLANES

One night when I was a young one living in the bush in Puka I heard the sound of the plane overhead and saw it. We thought *mamu* (spirits) were coming, it was frightening, because we didn't know what it was. The *ngangkari* (traditional healer) was there and told us, 'It's not *mamu*'.

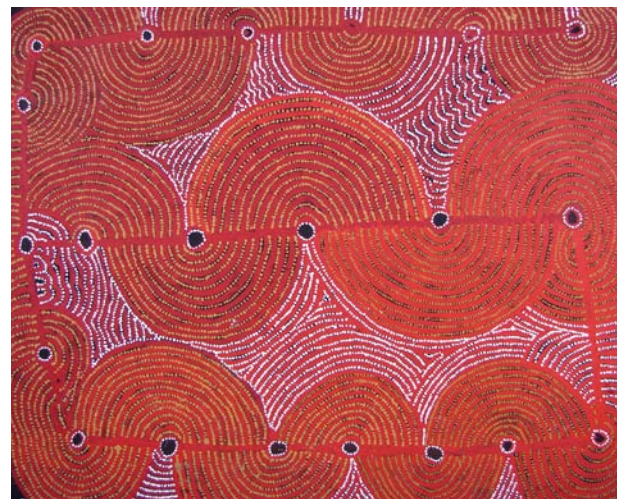
When I was a young fella we moved to Pukatja and saw them cleaning up the road so those aeroplanes could fly in. Lots of the kids were working and cleaning up the road, and that landing strip at Pukatja is at the same place today. We had to move lots of trees. Eventually the planes landed there and a white fella landed it and got out, and I was thinking this must be white fella way.

Now I'm going in the aeroplane like I go in my motorcar. I'm travelling in that big aeroplane – Qantas – and not feeling afraid.

POLITICS

I always see lots of government meetings on the TV. I always try to learn more about them by watching the Prime Minister and those government people on TV. I enjoy watching them and learning about them all the time.

That lady Julia Gillard she was Prime Minister and she pushed Kevin Rudd away, physically pushing him away, saying you're not good. Now Kevin is back.



TOP: Hector Tjupuru Burton, *Ngayuku Tjukula (My Rockhole)*, 2003. Acrylic on linen, 760 x 510 mm. Private collection. (423-03)

MIDDLE: Hector Tjupuru Burton, *Anumara Tjukurpa*, 2010. Acrylic on linen, 1525 x 1980 mm. Private collection. (257-10)

BOTTOM: Hector Tjupuru Burton, *Anumara Tjukurpa*, 2010. Acrylic on linen, 1525 x 1220 mm. Private collection. (337-10)



**I KNOW ALL THE YOUNG FELLAS ARE
THE MAIN ONES, THEY ARE YOUNG TREE
BRANCHES WITH GREEN LEAVES. WE
TEACH OUR YOUNG FELLAS THROUGH THE
FAMILY TREE – TO UNDERSTAND AND BE
AT HOME WITH THEIR DREAMINGS AND
THEIR LANDS.**

OPPOSITE PAGE: Hector Tjupuru Burton, 2013. Photograph Adam Knott.

QUOTE: Hector Tjupuru Burton, *A Hector Tjupuru Burton Initiative – 2011*,
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