



Untitled, acrylic on linen, 60 x 60cm



Winpa, acrylic on linen, 60 x 60cm

Piti

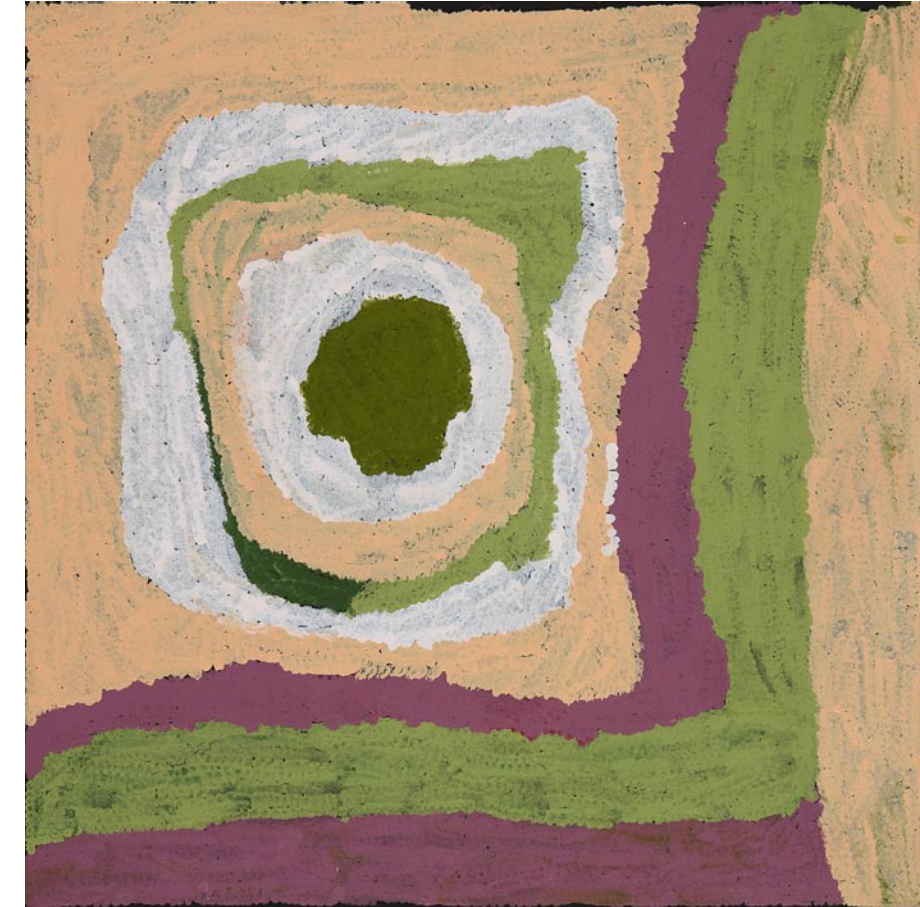
Lydia Balbal

Showing 10 August - 10 September 2010

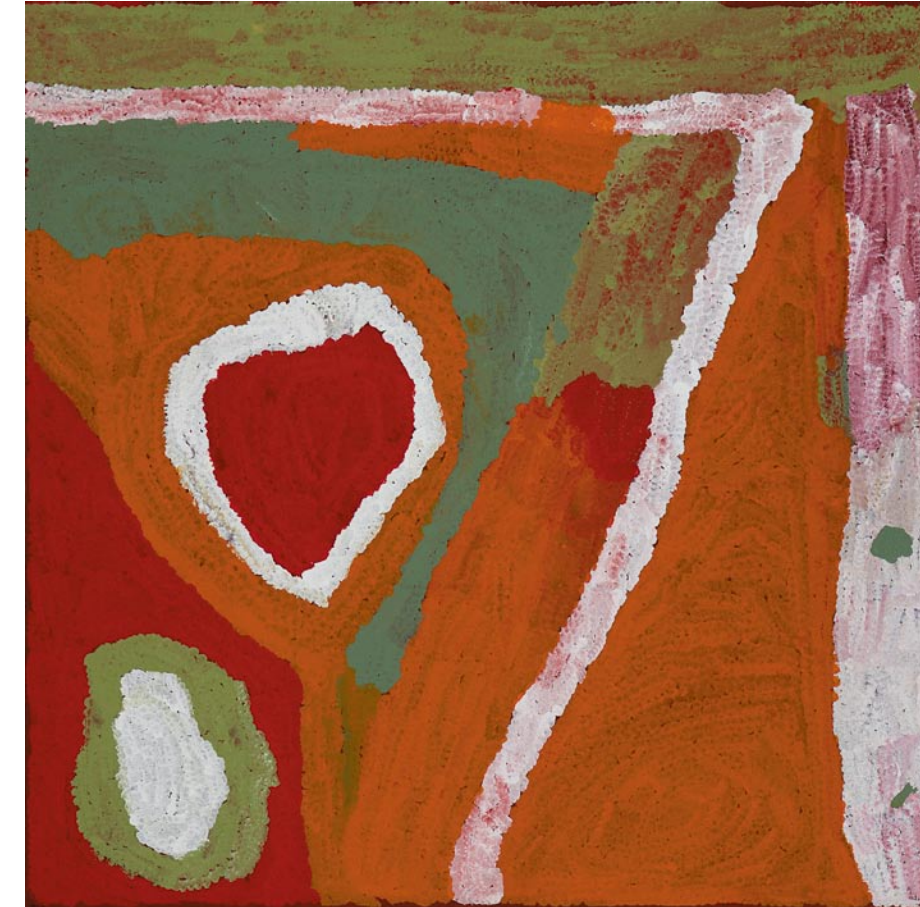


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Tuesday - Friday 10-5 & Saturday 9-2 | Director Matt Ward

Special thanks to Lydia Balbal, Emily Rohr and Abi Temby.



Untitled, acrylic on linen, 90 x 90cm



Kayu Kayu, acrylic on linen, 91 x 91cm



Outstation - art from art centres and Short St Gallery are proud to present

Front cover: Kayu Kayu, (detail) acrylic on linen, 91 x 91cm

PITI

Lydia Balbal

PITI - an exhibition by Lydia Balbal

To understand Balbal's painting, it is important to know that she is a bush woman born and bred. She is still a prolific hunter who can catch, skin, cook and eat a king brown snake with her bare hands. She lived in her Mangala king brown country until 1974 when her family came into the coastal community of Bidyadanga, then LaGrange Mission, when Balbal was about 18 years old. They were some of the last of their people to walk in. The first time Balbal painted Pikarong, her birthplace, a king brown snake appeared at the Bungalow (the painting studio in Broome where the Yulparija Artists work).

Piti is the Mangala word for the underground creeks that traverse the Great Sandy Desert. These creeks and rivers feed the water holes that sustained Balbal's people for tens of thousands of years. The linear under painting woven across these paintings are the piti as well as the walking and hunting tracks. These work like emotional veins, which underpin the complex, dotted surface she overlays in her signature flickering dot style. The dots merge in sections creating a complex spatial vortex, swirling veils that hover and shift over the subterranean architecture of the work.

To a western eye her works appear as fantastic abstract paintings laden with unexpected renderings of intricate paint. She combines a surprising palette and complex structure in her renderings of country. The contrasts in her work are emotive, and confronting, a journey through a landscape of the soul as much as a charting of her Great Sandy Desert home.

Balbal is her country, when she paints this landscape she gives it a life that transcends western notions of reality. The work in this exhibition reveals a fundamental dichotomy. The viewer oscillates between the emotional complexities created by the spatial interplay, and a strangely reassuring intimacy, which reflects her deep knowledge of country.

The work has an emotional honesty and integrity, which gives one a sense of familiarity. This is further emphasized by the confidence of her brushwork. Balbal takes us into the interior of this continent, a harsh and feared landscape and reveals its bounty and beauty, with such graciousness and generosity, one cannot help but be transcended to a place beyond our comfort zone and herein lies her greatness as a painter.

Emily Rohr, Short St Gallery Director. July 2010



Untitled, acrylic on canvas, 122 x 122cm



Untitled, acrylic on linen, 106 x 106cm



Untitled, acrylic on canvas, 122 x 122cm