



Maisie Bunday

Born in 1949, Ilyarra, Great Sandy Desert, Australia.

BIOGRAPHY

Maisie Bunday has been painting since 1989. Though she paints the same “Country” and story as her sisters, she has always strived to distinguish herself stylistically. Her painting is linked to her original work with “Batik”, a technique that involves drawing a design onto the fabric using a medium such as wax and then dyeing the fabric. The fluid and colourful liberation that this training gives Bunday is evident. She works with a loose-handed dry brush, layering colour to develop her own textured abstract interpretation of the food sources of her country (called Alalgura) on Utopia Station.

Bunday’s “Country” is near Alalgura soakage. There, every summer, women gather to celebrate the aftermath of good rains that have run through the creeks and caused the desert flowers and fruits to burst into growth. A ceremony called “Awelye” encourages the season into growth and abundance. The song, dances and body-painting are part of the education given to young girls between 8 and 14 years. Two main ritual and custodian leaders of the Alalgura country “sing up” the ceremony with “Kwurraparra”, ceremonial poles adorned with white cockatoo feathers, which stand in the centre of the area. Clusters of white feathers are worn on the forehead of the participants, held in place by a hair-string rope. Body paint lines are carefully applied to each woman and girl, with the chief custodian being painted first. Throughout the ceremony the women sing constantly of the story of their “Country”, and the food species that predominate and sustain life. First Nations People of Australia have no written language, so these songlines are the only way of passing their customs and secrets down through generations.

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

- 2016 *Utopia Sisters - The Petyarre Women*, Delmore Gallery with RedSea Gallery, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia
- 1988 *Time Before Time*, Austral Gallery, St Louis, United States
- 1988 *Painting and Batik from the Desert*, Utopia Art, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia
- 1988 *Utopia Batik*, Craft Council Gallery, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory, Australia
- 1988 *Utopia Batik*, Queensland Museum, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia
- 1987 *Fremantle Arts Centre*, Fremantle, Western Australia, Australia
- 1987 *Darwin Museum Gallery*, Darwin, Northern Territory, Australia
- 1987 *Yirrkala Community Centre*, Northern Territory, Australia
- 1987 Jogyakarta Fine Art Academy, Indonesia
- 1987 *Sydney Expo*, Craft Council Gallery, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia
- 1987 *The Araluen Centre*, Alice Springs, Northern Territory, Australia
- 1986 Craft Council Gallery, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory, Australia
- 1986 Bundaberg Art Gallery, Queensland, Australia
- 1986 *The Araluen Centre*, Springs Craft Festival, Alice Springs, Northern Territory, Australia
- 1985 *Black Women in Focus*, Adelaide Festival, Adelaide, South Australia, Australia
- 1985 Burnie Gallery, Tasmania, Australia
- 1985 Tasmanian Craft Gallery, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia
- 1984 Craft Council Gallery, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory, Australia
- 1984 Queensland University Gallery, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia
- 1984 Fireworks Gallery, Adelaide, South Australia, Australia
- 1984 *Sydney Craft Expo*, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia
- 1984 Darwin Craft Council Gallery, Darwin, Northern Territory, Australia
- 1984 The Araluen Centre, Alice Springs, Northern Territory, Australia

- 1983 Adelaide Festival Centre, Adelaide, South Australia, Australia
1983 Alice Springs Craft Council, Alice Springs, Northern Territory, Australia
1982 Sydney Craft Expo, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia
1982 Brisbane Commonwealth Games Exhibition, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia
1981 Floating Forests of Silks - Utopia Batik from the Desert, Adelaide Festival Centre, South Australia, Australia
1980 *Artworks*, Alice Springs, Northern Territory, Australia

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