

EMILY PWERLE

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Emily Pwerle (aka Apwerl, Pwerl, Pula), is the sister of another very well known artist, Minnie Pwerle, and comes from the area of Utopia, also known as Urauntja, which lies 300 km northeast of Alice Springs. Emily was encouraged to paint by Minnie's daughter, Barbara Weir, also a high profile artist, and in 2004, together with her sisters Molly and Galya, began their first workshop at the Ulotja Outstation, which continued on, with a major workshop run every six weeks.

Born: Utopia, NT

Lives: Lives and works in Utopia, NT

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS:

- 2010 *Tradition to Modernity*, Central Art (in conjunction with Tasmania Craft Fair), Tasmania
- 2009 *Utopia: Colours in the Desert*, Gonapyeona Art Space in conjunction with DACOU Australia, Australian Embassy Korea, Seoul, Korea
- 2009 *Body Markings* (Solo Show), Dacou, Melbourne
- 2009 Gallery Savah, Sydney
- 2008 *Women's Stories*, Alison Kelly Gallery, Richmond
- 2008 *Walking Together to Aid Aboriginal Health*, Shalom Gamarada Aboriginal Art Exhibition, University of NSW, Kensington
- 2008 *EWB Elements*, Dreamtime Art in conjunction with DACOU (Australian travelling exhibition)
- 2008 *Colours*, United Gallery, Sydney
- 2008 Gallery Savah, Sydney
- 2008 *Utopia Discoveries*, Flinders Lane Gallery, Melbourne
- 2008 *Utopia Collection*, Japinka Gallery, Perth
- 2007 *New Works from Utopia*, Space Gallery, Pittsburgh, PA, USA
- 2007 Annual group exhibition, APS Bendi Lango, Art Exhibition with Rio Tinto, Fireworks Gallery, Brisbane, QLD
- 2007 *Treasures of the Spirit - Investing in Aboriginal Art*, Tandanya Cultural Institute, Adelaide
- 2007 Group exhibition, Australian Embassy, Washington, USA
- 2007 *Desert Diversity*, Flinders Lane Gallery, Melbourne, VIC
- 2007 Annual Group Exhibition Shalom, University of NSW, Shalom Department, Kensington
- 2007 *Utopia in New York*, Robert Steele Gallery, New York, USA
- 2007 *Standing on Ceremony*, Tandanya Cultural Institute, Adelaide, SA
- 2007 Permanent exhibition, Dacou Adelaide, Port Adelaide, SA
- 2006/07 Group exhibition, Fireworks Gallery, Brisbane, QLD
- 2006 Group exhibition, The Pwerle Sisters, Artmob Gallery, Hobart, TAS
- 2006 Group exhibition, APS Bendi Lango Art Exhibition, Rio Tinto Offices, Melbourne, VIC
- 2006 Group exhibition, The Pwerle Sisters, Flinders Lane Gallery, Melbourne, VIC
- 2005 Group exhibition, Gallery Savah, Sydney, NSW
- 2005 Group exhibition, Mbantua Gallery, Alice Springs, NT
- 2005 Permanent exhibition and collection, Dacou Australia, Rosewater, SA

COLLECTIONS:

Mbantua Gallery Permanent Collection, Alice Springs
Dacou Australia, Rosewater, SA

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Henly, Susan Gough, "Powerful Growth of Aboriginal Art," *The New York Times*, November 6, 2005

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Another dreaming painted by the women is the northern wild orange (*Capparis Umbonata*), known in Alyawarr as Akarley (pronounced a-kar-li). This fruit grows on a shrub about 3.5m high with weeping foliage and white flowers, and the fruits hang on long stalks, turning yellow or reddish at maturity.

The women also paint a commonly occurring plant which has provided a staple food for Aboriginal people in Utopia for thousands of years. This plant is *Portulaca oleracea*, or munyeroo. The Alyawarr word for this plant is lyaw.

The other important dreaming for these painters is the dancing tracks which are made in the sand during women's ceremony, or awelye. Through their awelye ceremonies, women pay homage to their ancestors, show respect for their country and dance out their collective maternal role within their community. A design based on these dancing tracks is painted on women's bodies before a ceremony is performed, and this same design can be seen today in the women's works on canvas. Ochre, charcoal and ash are all used to paint designs on the women's upper bodies, and Pwerle women paint their chests, breasts and upper arms for awelye in ochre, red and white. The designs they use have been passed down for many generations, and only the Pwerle or Kemarre owners can paint them.

The depth and linear complexity of Emily's paintings have their origins in the separate dreaming symbols which she brings together on each of her canvases. Emily often paints three dreamings at once, overlapping the symbols for each one until a web of lines and shapes is formed.

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