

MEDIA RELEASE

'THESE ARE OUR STORIES'

The Papulankutja Artists from Blackstone, Western Australia were propelled into the national spotlight in 2005 when they won the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award for their entry of an entirely woven Toyota. However, what might not be common knowledge is that Blackstone is also home to a diverse, prolific and vibrant group of painters. It is these works which Woolloomgabby Art Gallery is proud to present for the first time in Queensland. **'These Are Our Stories'** runs from the **19th of February to the 20th of March** and will include 21 artists spanning different styles, stories and generations all united under the Art Centre's commitment to "Everybody working together with a strong heart."

It is this idea of strength which can be seen as a binding concern between the Papulankutja Artists. Papulankutja community was established in the 1970's when the Ngaayatjarra people left Warburton mission to return to their country. The Papulankutja Artists formed in 2001 from a need to create a network and community between artists working in different mediums from Blackstone and the surrounding area (notably Jameson). These artists were concerned with communicating stories of which they were custodians, namely the Seven Sisters' story, Illupa and Wati Kutjarra. Their stories still form the backbone of Papulankutja artworks although the innovation and diversity demonstrated by these painters is nothing less than cutting-edge. Their commitment to representation and story telling is self-evident through the variety and vigor of their practice.

The character of strength, Papulankutja's robust sense of spirit, is made palpable through the kineticism of Thomas Reid's rock art, the electricity of Anmanari Brown's depictions of country, the streaming nature of Rosie Lane's lines and the physically luminous canvases of Tjayanka Woods. The works, although stylistically separate from each other, are made strong through the Papulankutja artists knowledge, spirit and enthusiasm to translate stories to canvas. Their strength enables them to interpret communal stories on a personal level and to encourage the next generation of Blackstone to do the same. The community currently numbers over 80 artists. 'These Are Our Stories' demonstrates Woolloomgabby Art Gallery's commitment to showcasing the diversity and richness of different cultures within Australia and enables the Papulankutja Artists to communicate their stories with the Queensland public for the first time.

With a new Art Centre built in Blackstone only last year, the increased exposure and success of the Papulankutja painters is immanent. The Woolloomgabby Art Gallery extends an invitation to the Queensland public to be some of the first to experience the products of this artistically thriving community. Uplifting, contemporary and certain- the paintings in this show are not to be missed.

All are welcome to attend the **opening night** of **'These Are Our Stories'** on **Friday, 19th of February from 6.30pm - 9.30pm.**



Artist: Tjayanka Woods
Title: *The Seven Sisters*
Medium: acrylic on canvas
Size: 101.5 x 121 cm



Artist: Thomas Reid
Title: *untitled*
Medium: acrylic on canvas
Size: 61 x 101 cm