

Artist: Minnie Pwerle  
Born: c 1910  
Died: March, 2006  
Area: Utopia  
Language: Anmatyerre, Alyawarr

Title: Women's Awelye "Bush Melon"  
Medium: Acrylic on Canvas  
Size: 36" x 58"



Minnie's career as an artist began through Aboriginal ceremony and ritual. Her craft instigated by her appointment as a body painter during Women's ceremonies. Body paint designs are worn to represent Dreamings and various symbols specific to particular rituals. Usually the upper body is covered in animal fat and intricate designs painted on the chest, back and arms with paints made from ochre's.

It was not until 1999 at approximately 80 + years of age, that Minnie began painting on canvas. Her first series of works painted at the Utopia Communities workshops were linear paintings, expressing a bold, free-flowing, enigmatic style that quickly drew the interest of critics and art lovers alike. The artist's primary Dreamings include "Awelye-Atnwengerrp" (Women's Dreaming), "Bush Melon", and "Bush Melon Seed".

Minnie's more recent works have drawn comparisons to Emily Knwarreye's "Wild Yam Stories" painted in the mid 1990's. Eclectic in nature, her work seems to combine modernism, contemporary theory, impressionism and Aboriginality while also expressing a story of her own sacred Dreamings. Her combination of historical visual styles and spiritual content promote a sense of unity amongst two vary different spheres of influence.

Her contributions to the Aboriginal art movement have been invaluable, as a respected elder of her community her work offers insight in to the spiritual world of the Australian Aborigine, whilst providing visual art lovers with a striking, and highly unique collection of works to enjoy.

#### Solo Exhibitions:

- 2004 Minnie Pwerle, Flinders Lane Gallery, Melbourne.
- 2003 Minnie Pwerle Original & Authentic Aboriginal Art, Melbourne
- 2001 Women Artists of the Australian Desert Auckland, New Zealand
- 2000 Minnie Pwerle Sydney

#### Group Exhibitions:

- 2000, Mbantua Gallery, Alice Springs, NT
- 2001, Mbantua Gallery, Alice Springs, NT

2002, 'Generations', Japingka Gallery, WA  
2002, 'The Utopia Six', Flinders Lane Gallery, Vic  
2002, Chapman Gallery, ACT  
2002, 'United - Mother and Daughter', Alison Kelly Gallery, Vic  
2002, New York City, USA  
2002, Mbantua Gallery, Alice Springs, NT  
2002, October, Heart and Soul Gallery, Nashville, TN, USA  
2002, October, Mary Woods, Portland, OR, USA  
2002, October, Urban Wineworks, Portland, OR, USA  
2002, October, Carriage House Gallery - 'In the Cove', Portland, OR, USA  
2003, Feb, World Vision\_Walkabout Gallery, Sydney "My Grandmother and Me" 2  
2003, March, Light Over Utopia, Japingka Gallery, Fremantle, WA

Collections:

National Gallery of Victoria  
Queensland Art Gallery,  
Gallery of NSW  
Art Gallery of South Australia  
Kelton Foundation, USA  
Kreglinger Collection,  
Thomas Vroom Collection, The Netherlands

