



Kenny Williams Tjampitjinpa

(Australian, 1950 -)

Untitled #451

Acrylic on canvas
183 x 244 cm / 72 x 96.1 inch

ABOUT

In mythological times, two 'kuniya' (pythons), a male and a female, came from the east to a place called Karrilwarra, a rockhole and soakage water site north of the Kiwirrkura Community in Western Australia. They later travelled south-west to Wiluna. In Aboriginal mythology, snakes are responsible for the creation of all water sources, the most valuable commodity in a desert. The snake's tracks are depicted as the waving lines in the painting. This mythology forms part of the Tingari Cycle. A cycle of mythological stories about the supernatural ancestors of the Pintupi that during the formation of the earth travelled around the country, performing rites, teaching law and shaping life and the landscape. Since events associated with the Tingari Cycle are of a secret nature, no further details about the myth were given.

BIOGRAPHY

(Kenny Williams Tjampitjinpa)



Kenny Williams Tjampitjinpa was born around 1950 in Iliya, not far from Kiwirrkura, Western Australia. Kenny is the eldest son of Naata Nungurrayi and her first husband Pilamartitja Tjanga (circa 1917-1961), who died of thirst in the desert two years before their group's first encounter with white men. In 1963 he and his family came across Jeremy Long's Welfare Branch Patrol. In 1964, Sandy Nim Nim, as Kenny was nicknamed, and his family were brought to Papunya. In May 1988 Kenny began painting his Dreamings for Papunya Tula Artists, aided by Ronnie Tjampitjinpa. Kenny's principal 'homestead' site is Walawala near Kiwirrkura. Kenny's main Dreamings tell stories about the (Kuniya) python and Ngamanpura, a swamp west of Kintore where a black berry with the same name can be found. For a few years, Kenny was the chairman of Papunya Tula Artists and in 2000 he won the prestigious Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award. Kenny Williams is a perfectionist: he works slowly and with painstaking care. His paintings can be distinguished by a fine play of careful zig-zag-patterns, executed in subtle earth tones. The whole composition often has a hypnotic effect. Like the old masters from Papunya, Kenny treats his brushes and paint with great pride and reverence.

EXHIBITIONS

2015 Signs and Traces. Contemporary Aboriginal Art. Cultural institute Zamek. Poznan, Poland
2000 Papunya Tula: Genesis and Genius, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia
2001 'Aborigena', Palazzo Bricherasio Turin, Italy

COLLECTIONS

Art Gallery of New South Wales
Sydney Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
Artbank, Sydney

