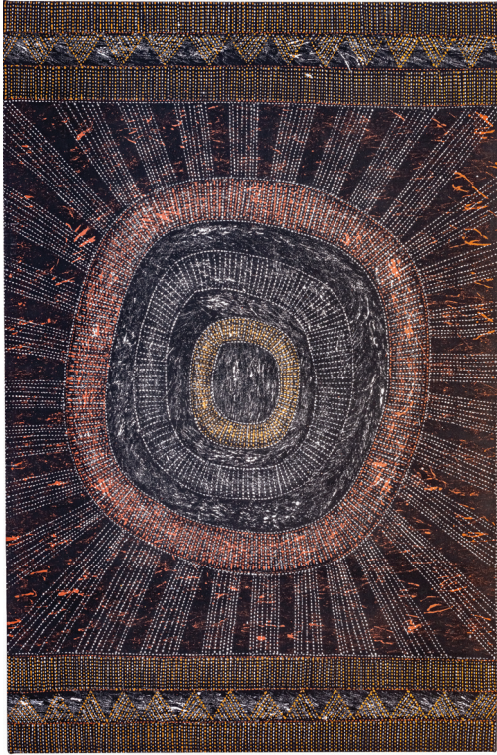


Yoi

21 February to 13 April 2024

An exhibition of works from the Munupi Arts & Crafts Association



Josephine Burak (Bino), *Milimika*, 2023, ochre on canvas, 120cm x 80cm. Image courtesy of Gillies Adamson Semple.

LONDON, 28 February, 2024 - JGM Gallery presents *Yoi*, an exhibition of works from the Munupi Arts & Crafts Association, located along Melville Island's north-western coastline, north of Darwin.

Featured are paintings by nine Munupi artists, each characterised and aligned by the expressive marks they employ. Often painted with natural ochres and a Pwoja Comb, these canvases possess a unique textural materiality. At first glance, they are seemingly asemic in appearance. For example, Alison Puruntatameri's *Winga*, meaning *Tidal Movement* or *Waves*, alludes to the rhythmic movement of the natural world. The result, free from a mimetic representation of reality, is inherently abstract in form.

This expression of gestural energy offers a unique insight into the movement of the artist and, by extension, the human presence, out of which art emerges; the artist's mark carries the testimony of its author and thus the identity of the artist themselves.

Delving deeper into the mark-making techniques of Tiwi Art, one finds that they emanate a distinctly spiritual presence. Dancing, or *yoi*, plays a large part of life on the Tiwi Islands. Depictions of concentric circular motifs, as featured in Josephine Burak's *Milimika*, outline the ceremonial dancing ground. Narrative dances are a key feature of ritual activity. They can depict both everyday life and historically significant events. During these dances, the participants paint their bodies with natural ochres, using designs that also appear on the canvases in *Yoi*. Once again, this brings into direct dialogue, movement and narrative, the body and language. In the words of Judith Ryan (*Art and Australia*, 1997): "For Tiwi people, to sing is to dance is to paint."

The paintings in this exhibition all share a common thread. In Tiwi culture, dance is established as corporeal communication. In a somewhat parallel motion, the canvases display gesture. Contrary to the venture of many Western painters, the finished product invites the viewer to savour and enjoy the movement which led to the artwork's creation.

Jennifer Guerrini Maraldi (Director of JGM Gallery) writes that "In 2017, I travelled to the Tiwi Islands, where I first saw the work of many of the exhibiting artists. Their paintings, and the landscapes that inspired them, left an indelible impression on me. Though intricately constructed, these works possess an irrepressible power. They are tender, yet bold, a sublime accumulation of subtle interconnections."

Exhibiting artists include: Alison Puruntatameri | Arthur John Cowell | Carol Puruntatameri | Christine Puruntatameri | Delores Tipuamantumirri | Dorothy Noni Poantimului | Josephine Burak | Lucinda Puruntatameri | Simplicia Tipungwuti.

For further information and press enquiries, please contact the gallery at info@jgmgallery.com or + 44 (0) 207 228 6027.

Opening Reception:

Wednesday, 28 February, 6:00pm - 8:00pm
24 Howie Street,
London SW11 4AY

JGM GALLERY

24 Howie Street London SW11 4AY

Phone: +44 (0) 207 228 6027 | Email: info@jgmgallery.com | Website: www.jgmgallery.com