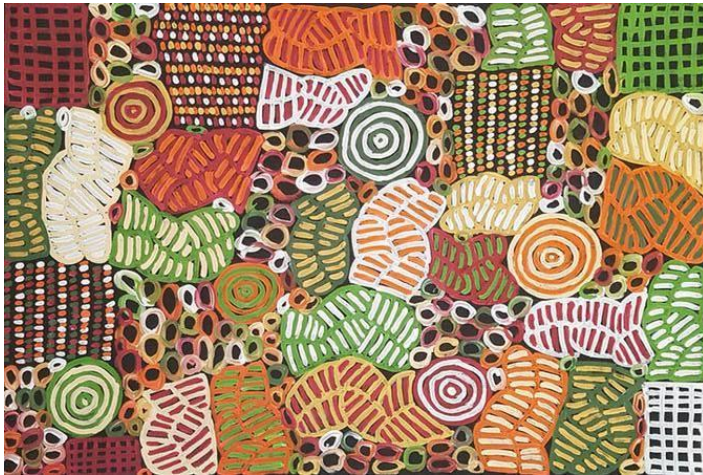




## ABORIGINAL ART GALLERIES

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### BETTY MBITJANA



Born circa 1954 in the artistically rich area of Utopia, Betty Mbitjana is the daughter of one of Australia's most renowned artists Minnie Pwerle and the sister of celebrated artist Barbara Weir.

Betty's paintings depict the designs that the women would paint on their bodies, and the dancing tracks which are made in the sand during women's (awelye) ceremony. 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 Betty's works on canvas and in the works of her mother, sisters, and aunts.

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. Betty adds to this meaning by expressing her mother's dreaming through her own distinctive style, attributing a modern touch to the paintings.

Betty Mbitjana is consistently growing in popularity, as she continues to attract attention with her energetic and colourful designs painted cleanly and evenly onto the canvas. The energy and exuberance Betty creates on the canvas is admired both domestically and internationally. As a result Betty's artwork has become a valued entity in many private and public collections.