



## ABORIGINAL ART GALLERIES

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### KUDDITJI KNGWARREYE



Kudditji Kngwarreye was born circa 1928 and was an Aboriginal artist from the Utopia region in the Northern Territory. He passed away peacefully in January 2017 after a successful career as an artist.

Utopia is a series of Aboriginal owned outstations 240 kilometres north east of Alice Springs. Kudditji served as an elder of the Eastern Anmatyerre language group and as a young man worked as a stockman herding cattle by foot across his country. Kudditji was a traditional custodian of his country and of the Emu story, for which he was responsible in initiating the younger men of his clan. Although not much detail is given about aspects of this initiation, it is generally understood that this involved the practical teaching of hunting the Emu as well as the spiritual story of the Emu ancestors. It was Kudditji's obligation to continue this story which he explored within his artistic practice. His intimate physical and spiritual knowledge of the Anmatyerre country can be seen through his body of work.

It is commonly believed that Kudditji began painting in the early 1980s like his sister, the late Emily Kame Kngwarreye. Kudditji mixed his colours directly onto the canvas, layering his paint into a patchwork formation. Often his works change throughout the day as different light sources draw out different colours and elements, whilst others recede. It is in this depth that his story of country and the story of the Emu resides, the complexity and vastness of his landscape only accessible in patches as they come to light.

Kudditji's work has found great acclaim and is featured in many important collections in both Australia and overseas.