



Umoona Community Art centre Aboriginal
Corporation
C/O 57-59 George Street

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Artist: Pearl Austin
Date of Birth: 7/04/1963
Sub Section/s:
Language/s: Yankunytjatjara
Antikirinya



Biography:

Pearl Austin is an Antikirinya Yankunytjatjara woman, respected community leader, educator, and artist. Both of her parents are Yankunytjatjara—her mother was born in Amata, and her father was born at Mount Eba Station.

Pearl was born in Port Augusta and spent her early schooling years in Lucindale and at Callendale Station. The impact of the Stolen Generations deeply shaped her family's path, prompting their return to Port Augusta. At the age of 13, Pearl and her family relocated to Coober Pedy, where she has lived ever since.

She has worked as an Aboriginal Education Worker at the Coober Pedy Area School for over 30 years, supporting generations of students and strengthening cultural knowledge within the education system.

Pearl's art practice is grounded in her connection to Country and centres around three recurring themes: waterholes, the transformation of the land through rain, and the reflection of sunlight across two states of Country—dry and wet. She describes her inspiration as the "beauty of the dry" and the "colours of the wet," evoking the subtle but powerful shifts that animate the desert landscape.

Formally, her work combines the inherited tradition of dot painting with gestural flicks and expressive drips—an abstract evolution born from the physical demands and rhythms of dotting itself. This fusion of technique produces dynamic surfaces that speak to both endurance and release, structure and spontaneity.

Her father's ties to Mabel Creek, along with her lifelong relationship to the Coober Pedy region, further ground her paintings in the textures and stories of desert Country. Through her work, Pearl honours the land, her lineage, and the enduring vitality of her community.

Group Exhibitions

2025, October	Yaama Ganu Moree New Beginnings
2025, October	APY Gallery Adelaide Generation Next (for Tarnanthi)
2024, August	APY Gallery Sydney Opal Fields
2024, February	APY Gallery Adelaide, Adelaide Bright Shiny Things - New Works from Coober Pedy
2023, March	APY Gallery Melbourne Stories from Many Places APY Gallery Melbourne
2022, September	APY Gallery Melbourne Itilkirra Itilkirra (Side by Side)
2022, June	APY Gallery Sydney Painted Desert
2022, February	APY Gallery Adelaide Opal Country

Awards

2024 Finalist Malka Aboriginal Art Prize

Commissions

2025 Country Road x Ngali x Pearl Austin Womenswear Collection