

Artist Collection

ARTIST Pauline Nampijinpa Singleton

ARTWORK Yankirri Jukurrpa IV Multicolour
(Emu Dreaming) – Ngarlikirlangu

SKU UR_AB38



ARTWORK STORY

This painting depicts a 'Yankirri Jukurrpa' (Emu [*Dromaius novaehollandiae*] Dreaming) from a place called Ngarlikurlangu, approximately 50kms north of Yuendumu. The 'kirda' (owners) of this Dreaming are Nangala/Nampijinpa women and Jangala/Jampijinpa men.

This artwork tells the story of a 'yankirri' (emu) and a 'wardilyka' (bush turkey [*Ardeotis australis*]).

While the emu lived at a soakage to the west called Warnirripanu (or Walangkamirri), the bush turkey lived at a soakage to the east called Parirri.

Although the emu and bush turkey used to go around the country picking 'yakajirri' (bush raisins [*Solanum centrale*]) together and mashing them into 'kapurdu' (fruit balls) to save in their nests for later, they were quite jealous of each other.

In particular, the emu thought that the bush turkey was picking the best and juiciest bush raisins and leaving him with only the sour ones.

So, while the bush turkey was out hunting, the emu went to the east and smashed up the fruit balls that the bush turkey had been saving in his nest.

When the bush turkey returned, he found his smashed fruit balls and realised that the emu had destroyed them. He went to the west to confront the emu and when he found him, they started fighting.

The bush turkey eventually flew away to the north, leaving behind the smashed bush raisin balls.

This practice of making fruit balls is a traditional Warlpiri method of storing bush raisins, which started in the old days when people would dry out the raisins, grind them with a rock in a coolamon, mix with water, form balls, and cover them with red ochre so they would stay fresh for longer.

Today at Ngarlikirlangu we can see round, red rocks which are the fruit balls that the emu once smashed.



There is also a dance for this Dreaming that is performed during men's initiation ceremonies. Several other Jukurrpa are also located at Ngarlikirlangu, including 'wardilyka Jukurrpa' (bush turkey Dreaming), 'yardjiinyapa Jukurrpa' (meat ant Dreaming), and 'pirntina Jukurrpa' (woma or Ramsay's python [*Aspidites ramsayi*] Dreaming). Many bush raisins grow around the Ngarlikirlangu area today.

In contemporary Warlpiri paintings, traditional iconography can be used to represent the Jukurrpa, associated sites, and other elements. Emus are usually represented by arrow-like shapes that depict their 'wiriya' (footprints) as they walk around.

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