



Mirdidingkingathi Juwarnda Sally Gabori

Born c.1924, Bentinck Island, Queensland, Australia. Died 2015.

BIOGRAPHY

Sally Gabori was born circa 1924 on the south side of Bentinck Island in the Gulf of Carpentaria's South Wellesley archipelago at a place called Mirdidingki. Her totem animal was *juwarnda* (dolphin). Gabori and the other Kaiadilt people of Bentinck Island were forcibly removed by missionaries to Mornington Island in 1948, which catalysed decades of immense social and geographic dislocation. It was during this period that Kayardild was hardly ever spoken and traditional culture was virtually abandoned. Gabori returned to Bentinck Island in the 1990s when a small outstation was built in the southeast at Nyinyilki, and even then, it was not to stay but to visit. When she began painting at Mornington Island Arts, Gabori had spent half her life separated from her Country, witnessing the dampening of her culture and language.

Gabori's personal life informs a biographical reading of her collected works, as they were not only vigorous and fervently produced but also stylistically idiosyncratic, as are paintings by other Kaiadilt women artists practicing in the same era. Before Gabori and other Kaiadilt women began painting their lands, stories and identities in acrylic, a visual tradition for Kaiadilt culture was, as Nicholas Evans and Penelope Johnson wrote in 2013, somewhat unprecedented, existing mostly in transient forms such as body painting. The mature visual language Gabori developed over her nine year career, in this case, embodied her individuated way of seeing and comprehending her world.

Gabori's work is held in a number of significant public institutions in Australia and internationally, including by the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia and the Musée du Quai Branly, Paris, France. Gabori's career was celebrated with a major retrospective of her at the Fondation Cartier, Paris, France in 2022.

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2021 *Sally Gabori*, Fondation Cartier pour l'art Contemporain, Paris, France
 - 2017 *Mirdidingkingathi Juwarnda Sally Gabori: Dulka Warngiid – Land of All*, Queensland Art Gallery, Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane and National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia
 - 2016 *Sally Gabori – Painted Island Home*, Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne, Australia
 - 2015 *Sally Gabori: Colour Country – A Survey 2005–2013*, Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne, Australia
 - 2013 *This is my Land, this is my Sea. This is who I am. A survey exhibition of paintings by Sally Gabori, 2005–2012*, Drill Hall Gallery, Australian National University, Canberra, Australia
 - 2013 *Sally Gabori*, Sydney Contemporary, Carriageworks, Sydney, Australia
 - 2010 *Mundamurra Ngijinda Dulk: My Island Home*, The Gallery in Cork Street, London, United Kingdom
 - 2010 *Sally Gabori. Danda dulk ngijinda dulk. This Land is My Land*, Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, United States
 - 2010 *Sally Gabori*, Raft Artspace, Darwin, Australia
 - 2008 *Sally Gabori, Dulka Warngiid – Land of All*, Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne, Australia
 - 2007 *Sally Gabori*, Dibirdibi Country Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne, Australia
 - 2006 *Sally Gabori and the Bentinck Island Gang*, Grantpirrie Gallery, Sydney, Australia
 - 2005 *Sally's Story*, Woolloongabba Art Gallery, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia
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GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2025 *What do you see?*, JGM Gallery, London, United Kingdom
- 2024 *Revelation & Concealment*, JGM Gallery, London, United Kingdom
- 2020 *Reflection*, JGM Gallery, London, United Kingdom
- 2020 *TM Lighting*, London, United Kingdom
- 2017 *Lasting Memory*, Museum of Contemporary Aboriginal Art, Utrecht, Netherlands

- 2017 *Mad Love*, Arndt Gallery, Berlin, Germany
2015 *Indigenous Art: Moving Backwards into the Future*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia
2014 *Sublime: Contemporary Works from the Collection*, Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia
2014 *My Country: Contemporary Art from Black Australia*, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, Auckland, New Zealand
2014 *Kaiadilt Women: Sally Gabori, Netta Loogatha, Elsie Gabori, Pencil, Paint, Paper – Seascapes of Bentinck Island*, Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia
2013 *Australia*, Royal Academy of Arts, London, United Kingdom
2013 *Personal Structures*, 55th Venice Biennale, Palazzo Bembo, Venice, Italy
2010 *Mundamurra Ngijinda Dulk: My Island Home*, The Gallery in Cork Street, London, United Kingdom
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COLLECTIONS

ANZ Bank Collection, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia
Artbank, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia
ARTIZON Museum (formerly Bridgestone Museum of Art), Tokyo, Japan
Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia
Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, South Australia, Australia
Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, Western Australia, Australia
Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, Auckland, New Zealand
Foundation Burkhardt-Felder, Motiers, Switzerland
Museum of Contemporary Aboriginal Art, Utrecht, Netherlands
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, ACT, Australia
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia
Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia
University of Queensland Art Museum, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia

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