

## ARTIST'S PROFILE



Artist	Lena Pwerle (Pula)
Born	1934
Language	Anmatyerre
Area	<i>Lyentye</i> (Mosquito Bore) Utopia Region, North East of Alice Springs
Medium	Acrylic on Canvas and Linen, Wood Carvings, Batik on Silk, Scarf
Subject(s)	<i>Awelye</i> (Women's Ceremony), Bush Plum Dreaming and Soakage

Lena, wife of the late Left Hand Sam Ngwarai (Kngwarreye), is mother to five children including that of artist Nora Petyarre.

She grew up at Utopia Homestead, some 240 km North East of Alice Springs with her siblings Ray Loy, Cowboy Loy and Louie (Louis) Pwerle. Lena has lived in many places in the Utopia Region, including that of Ngkwarlerlaneme where she lived with her husband and children for many years. She is currently living at Mosquito Bore in the Utopia Region.

Initially Lena worked in the medium of batik along with over eighty other women from the Utopia Region in Central Australia. Her work in batik is featured in "Utopia – A Picture Story". In 1996 she was invited to represent Australia in Western Samoa for the Festival of Pacific Arts where she was marked as 'among the best available talent'. In this same year she also traveled to Indonesia with other women of Utopia for a workshop funded by the Northern Territory Department of Education so that they could learn more about the art of batik.

Lena began painting for Mbantua Gallery in the mid 1990's. Not a frequent painter, Lena has maintained her style throughout her paintings as a fine circular pattern of dots reflecting her soakage Dreaming, or unkempt arced motifs representing her Awelye – body paint designs for her Soakage Dreaming. Traditional colours of ochre reds, tawny yellows and soft whites bequeath her paintings with simplicity.

Lena has only ever been known to paint the story for Soakage Dreaming, Bush Plum Dreamin and various bush foods.

Lena enjoys painting and encourages other family members to do so. In January 2003 Lena painted at Mbantua's Workshop in Alice Springs along with fellow artists Sarah and Audrey Morton Kngwarrey, Angelina Pwerle and renowned artist Barbara Weir. In February 2003 she returned ever so enthusiastically this time bringing along her sister Rosie Pwerle and daughter Nora.

## COLLECTIONS

Powerhouse Museum, Sydney  
 The Holmes á Court Collection, Perth  
 Mbantua Gallery Private Collection, Alice Springs

## EXHIBITIONS

- 1985 The Second National Aboriginal Art Award Exhibition, Museum and Art Gallery on the Northern Territory, Darwin
- 1989 Utopia Women's Paintings, the First Works on Canvas, A Summer Project 1988-89 S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney
- 1990 'Utopia – A Picture Story' an exhibition of 88 works on silk from the Holmes á Court Collection by Utopia artists which toured Eire and Scotland
- 1991 The Eighth National Aboriginal Art Award Exhibition, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
- 1992 Central Aboriginal Art and Craft Exhibition, Araluen Centre, Alice Springs
- 1994 Central Aboriginal Art and Craft Exhibition, Araluen Centre, Alice Springs
- 1999 Mbantua Gallery, Alice Springs, N.T
- 2001 Mbantua Gallery, Alice springs, N.T
- 2002 Mbantua Gallery - Art and Soul Gallery, Nashville, Tennessee, U.S.A
- 2002 Mbantua Gallery - 'The Cove Gallery' Portland, Oregon U.S.A (Benefit - OHSU Heart Research Centre)
- 2002 Mbantua Gallery - Urban Wine Works, Portland, Oregon U.S.A (Benefit – OHSU Heart Research Centre)
- 2002 Mbantua Gallery - Mary's Woods, Portland, Oregon U.S.A (Benefit – OHSU Heart Research Centre)
- 2002 Mbantua Gallery - New City Merchants, Knoxville, Tennessee U.S.A
- 2003 Mbantua Gallery - Art and Soul Gallery, Nashville, Tennessee U.S.A
- 2003 Mbantua Gallery - 'The Cove Gallery' Portland, Oregon U.S.A (Benefit - OHSU Heart Research Centre)
- 2003 Mbantua Gallery - Contemporary Aboriginal Art Event, Umpqua Bank, Portland, Oregon U.S.A (Benefit - OHSU Heart Research Centre)
- 2003 Mbantua Gallery - Mary's Woods, Portland Oregon U.S.A (Benefit - OHSU Heart Research Centre)
- 2003 Mbantua Gallery - Art From The Dreamtime, Portland Art Museum, Portland Oregon U.S.A (Benefit - OHSU Heart Research Centre)
- May-June 2005 'Small Wonders' (*A collection of 1'x1' and 1'x1½' paintings*), Mbantua Gallery, Alice Springs, N.T