

Lily Kelly NAPANGARDI



Dates: 1948
Language: Pintupi / Luritja
Community: Mount Liebig
Art: Aboriginal
Region: Occidental Desert
State: Western Australia



Lilly Kelly spent her youth in the Papunya community, where the contemporary Aboriginal art movement was born in the 1970s. She observed the first painters depicting the legends of her people on canvas and it was under their impetus that she began to paint herself in the early 1980s. Her work was quickly noticed as she won the Northern Territory Art Award for Excellence in Aboriginal Painting in 1986. In 2003, she was a finalist in the Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award (NATSIAA), the largest award for Aboriginal artists. More recently, she was named one of Australia's fifty most collectible artists by Australian Art Collector magazine in 2006.

In this painting Lilly Kelly has chosen to represent one of the essential elements of her sacred territory: the sandhills. Indeed, the artist is not only a respected lawwoman in her community but also the guardian of these places and her painting aims to teach new generations the secrets of their environment. These sandhills are formed in the desert by the combined action of wind and rain.

Resulting from the transposition on canvas of motifs traditionally realized on the ground, the aboriginal paintings exploit in particular all the possibilities of the « *dot painting* » (or « *pointillism* ») specific to the « *satellite* » canvases of the desert. Originally, these dots were used to underline the contours of the objects and places represented. On canvas, their use was quickly systematized to the point of becoming the « *trademark* » of contemporary Aboriginal painting. At the same time, each artist proposes his version of *dot painting*, and the mastery of this art has also become one of the criteria for the appreciation of the works. It is worth noting that Lilly Kelly has developed her own style by scattering multiple very fine dots on her canvas which, when seen from a certain distance, gives the impression that it is literally moving before our eyes.

Collections :

- Musée du Quai Branly, Paris, France
- The National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
- Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane
- Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
- National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne