



Dolly Snell 2015 Telstra Award Winner

Mangkaja Artist featured in the new film PUTUPARRI AND THE RAINMAKERS takes the Telstra Art Award back to the Kimberley!

Jukuja Dolly Snell, who features in the new Australian documentary film PUTUPARRI AND THE RAINMAKERS, has won the 2015 Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award for her work 'Kurtal', announced in Darwin on Friday evening.

Jukuja's country is centred around Kurtal a permanent waterhole or jila in the Great Sandy Desert where she was born c. 1933. When you ask Dolly about Kurtal she will tell you - 'That's my Kurtal, [as] long as I've been born there. That's not another jila no, one jila.'

Jukuja's winning canvas was created following a major trip back to Kurtal in 2014 with four generations of her family. This trip features in PUTUPARRI AND THE RAINMAKERS, which will open in select cinemas from October 1.

The canvas depicts the site itself, the *jilji* (sand hills) surrounding it and *kutu-kutu*, the lines of cloud that herald the onset of the wet season. The blue line signifies the direction to enter the site, an important protocol given the power of the snake spirit that lives at Kurtal. The vast central areas of colour are Dolly's father Lawa-Lawa who, when he died, came to rest in the *jila* as the spirit of Kurtal.

Jukuja was one of the founding members of Karrayili Adult Education Centre and later Mangkaja Arts Resource Agency in Fitzroy Crossing. She has painted and exhibited continuously with Mangkaja Arts since the first group show *Karrayili: ten years on* at Tandanya National Aboriginal Cultural Institute, Adelaide in 1991. She was also one of the leading artists responsible for the production of the iconic *Ngurrara I and Ngurrara II* native title canvases in 1996 and 1997 respectively. She is represented in many national public and private collections.

Jukuja and her husband Nyiripirr Spider Snell both feature in PUTUPARRI AND THE RAINMAKERS. The film highlights the family's tenacity in their campaign for recognition of their native title rights over Kurtal and the surrounding country.

In tandem with her husband Spider, Jukuja has actively maintained the stories and songs for Kurtal. She has been a dedicated teacher to her grandsons and great grandsons and has continued to instigate public performances of Kurtal ceremonies. This award is an appropriate acknowledgement of Jukuja's life's work. It honours a woman who has devoted her life to her family and her culture.

PUTUPARRI AND THE RAINMAKERS takes audiences on a rare and emotional journey to meet the traditional rainmakers of Australia's Great Sandy Desert. The film spans 20 transformative years in the life of Dolly's grandson, Tom "Putuparri" Lawford as he navigates the deep chasm between his Western upbringing and his determination to keep his traditional culture alive. Director Nicole Ma documents Putuparri's journey, travelling with him and his family on numerous occasions to Kurtal, the sacred waterhole in the Great Sandy Desert where they ritually make rain.

Set against the backdrop of this long fight for ownership of traditional lands *Putuparri and the Rainmakers* is an emotional, visually breathtaking story of love, hope and the survival of Aboriginal law and culture against all odds.

