MAGMA GALLERIES PRESENTS

AUBREY TJANGALA TJANGALA

5 NOV – 12 DEC 2026

PRESENTED IN COLLABORATION
WITH PAPUNYA TULA ARTISTS

MAGMA



Aubrey Tjangala in Kintore Studio, October 2026

Aubrey cuts a distinctive figure as he walks through Walungurru (Kintore), the remote community where we met several years ago. Making his way towards the art centre, you can often hear him before he arrives, owing to the portable speaker he carries with him, on which he plays country music (which you can dance to) and gospel music (which you can't dance to, he informed me once). As the twang of the guitar cuts the morning air, his figure comes into view, growing in size under his characteristic cowboy hat as he ambles into the studio for the day.

Born in 1974 at Yayayi, a soakage in a bend of Ilili Creek, just west of Papunya, Aubrey's arrival into the world occurs amidst a period of great transition for the Pintupi-speaking people. The 1950s and 60s had seen large groups of people from out west arrive in Papunya, with some corralled by the controversial Native Welfare Patrols, and others arriving by foot in the face of significant food and water shortages due to severe drought conditions. Finding themselves living on land that wasn't theirs, the establishment of Yayayi marks an expression of the desire of the Pintupi to return home, a

demonstration of agency amidst the government controlled settlement of Papunya, and the early stages of a movement that would gather momentum as the decade rolled on.

Against this backdrop, however, an explosion of cultural and artistic activity was taking place. It was in 1971 that a group of Pintupi, Luritja, Arrernte, Anmatyerr and Warlpiri men had begun to turn traditional designs into a new form, that of acrylic on canvas (and later, linen), an expression of knowledge and culture that, over the course of its history, has changed the face of Australian art. The company that the artists formed, Papunya Tula Artists Pty Ltd, became a vehicle through which the painters could claim their autonomy, assert their rights and shape their collective futures. Attempting an in-depth history of Papunya Tula and the return west by the Pintupi is far beyond the scope of this short text, but it provides crucial context to Aubrey's work, and it enables the introduction of Aubrey's late father, the renowned painter Ronnie Tjampitjinpa, who became a key figure within the intertwined endeavours.

Success was achieved with the establishment of Walungurru (Kintore) in 1981, where Aubrey moved with his family in 1983, spending his early years living at the Ininti outstation to the northwest of the Walungurru settlement proper. Over the next three decades, Aubrey bore witness to the development of the painting movement, a unique aesthetic steeped in Tjukurrpa, the mythopoetic scaffold that supports cultural life in the Western Desert – the stories of ancestral beings who travelled across the land, whose actions formed and shaped significant features of the landscape, defined the meaningful order of being and who left behind the essence of all future beings.[1] We could define this period within Aubrey's artistic development as one of intense study, absorbing these stories and an understanding of how these can be expressed through observation of his father's work.

While Aubrey couldn't give me a definitive date for when he first started painting, he informed me that it occurred when he was a young fella, and that it took on a seriousness and significance as his father aged. Having witnessed his father's stylistic transition from the lines and dots that characterised the early Papunya work to the rhythmic and linear style that came to define the Kintore men's paintings of the 1990s, this is where Aubrey's painting began in earnest, in a manner unmistakably influenced by Ronnie's work, and portraying the Tjukurrpa stories that surround and shaped Walungurru, those of the Minyma Kutjarra (travelling women), Ngintaka (Perentie) and Kapi (Water). These are stories that he has become custodian for, and that he has an obligation to preserve, and within this context, present or depict.

MAGMA

Earlier exhibitions of Aubrey's painting, such as My Father's Story (Paul Johnstone Gallery, 2023) and even as recently as Tjutatjarra Man (MAGMA Galleries, 2025), demonstrate the lasting significance of Ronnie's work on Aubrey's development as an artist. His explanation of the what and why of his painting has always been buttressed by mention of his father, his father's painting and a desire to continue on this culturally significant activity. With his father's passing, however, Aubrey finds himself quickly becoming one of the few older men of the Kintore studio, a role in which he is slowly but surely finding his place.

It appears that Aubrey finds himself to have arrived again at a place of transition. When I asked him what he wanted to call this exhibition, he thought about it for several days, before finally coming back to me with Tjangala, a reference to his own skin name, marking his place within the Pintupi kinship system – a classificatory framework which dictates how each person within the cultural ecosystem relates to one another. I was surprised by this, given the reverence he places on his father's work in relation to his own. Upon reflection, however, I see it as Aubrey seeking to take what he has inherited and to push it further, making it his own.

Tjangala presents a body of recent work by Aubrey, a display of his skill and assuredness as a painter, shaped by his father and informed by the cultural knowledge he has inherited. While the similarities between generations are obvious at first glance, a closer consideration of the works presented here demonstrate an evolution taking place – if Aubrey's earlier works could be read as seeking to emulate his father as closely as possible, we can see now the looseness of his application, the laminating effect that emerges as his lines overlap, and an embrace of a palette beyond that of traditional Western Desert painting.

Beyond that, however, Tjangala presents an artist moving into seniority and growing into his role as a future leader, a future he is walking towards confidently, cowboy hat on.

- Jaxon Waterhouse

---

[1] Eternal thanks to Fred Myers, whose words continue to be more concise and sharper than I could ever manage, despite the span of time between publication and my plagiarism. Fred Myers, Painting Culture: The Making of an Aboriginal High Art (2002, Duke University Press, pp. 17–18).

MAGMA



Aubrey Tjangala
Untitled, 2026
Acrylic on Belgian linen
61 x 55 cm

$1,500

MAGMA GALLERIES
5 BEDFORD ST, COLLINGWOOD, 3066
WWW.MAGMAGALLERIES.COM

MAGMA



Aubrey Tjangala
Untitled, 2026
Acrylic on Belgian linen
61 x 55 cm

$ 1,500

MAGMA GALLERIES
5 BEDFORD ST, COLLINGWOOD, 3066
WWW.MAGMAGALLERIES.COM

MAGMA



Aubrey Tjangala
Untitled, 2026
Acrylic on Belgian linen
91 x 61 cm

$ 2,200

MAGMA GALLERIES
5 BEDFORD ST, COLLINGWOOD, 3066
WWW.MAGMAGALLERIES.COM

MAGMA



Aubrey Tjangala
Untitled, 2025
Acrylic on belgian linen
91 x 61 cm

$ 2,200

MAGMA GALLERIES
5 BEDFORD ST, COLLINGWOOD, 3066
WWW.MAGMAGALLERIES.COM

MAGMA



Aubrey Tjangala
Untitled, 2026
Acrylic on Belgian linen
107 x 91 cm

$ 5,800

MAGMA GALLERIES
5 BEDFORD ST, COLLINGWOOD, 3066
WWW.MAGMAGALLERIES.COM

MAGMA

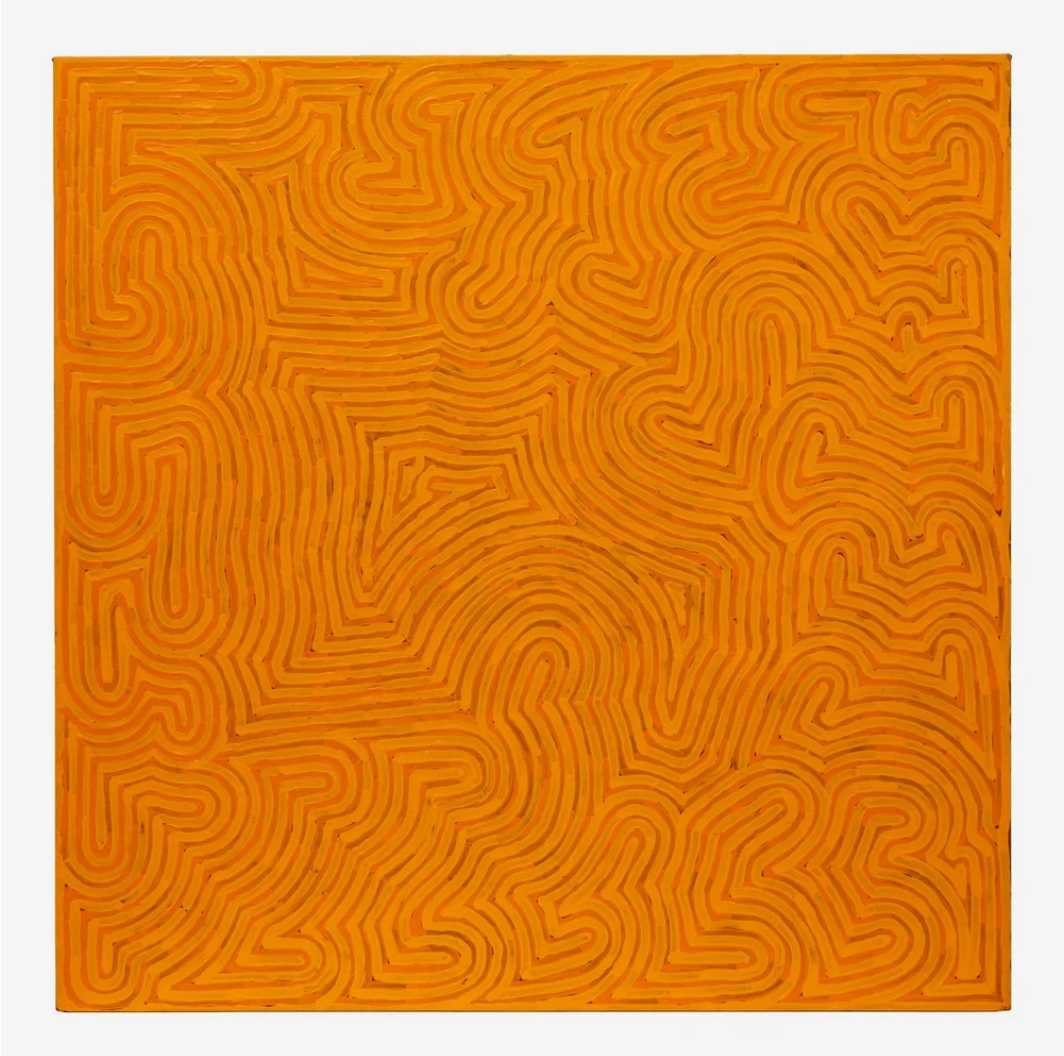


Aubrey Tjangala
Untitled, 2025
Acrylic on belgian linen
122 x 122 cm

$ 8,500

MAGMA GALLERIES
5 BEDFORD ST, COLLINGWOOD, 3066
WWW.MAGMAGALLERIES.COM

MAGMA



Aubrey Tjangala
Untitled, 2025
Acrylic on belgian linen
122 x 122 cm

$ 8,500

MAGMA GALLERIES
5 BEDFORD ST, COLLINGWOOD, 3066
WWW.MAGMAGALLERIES.COM

MAGMA

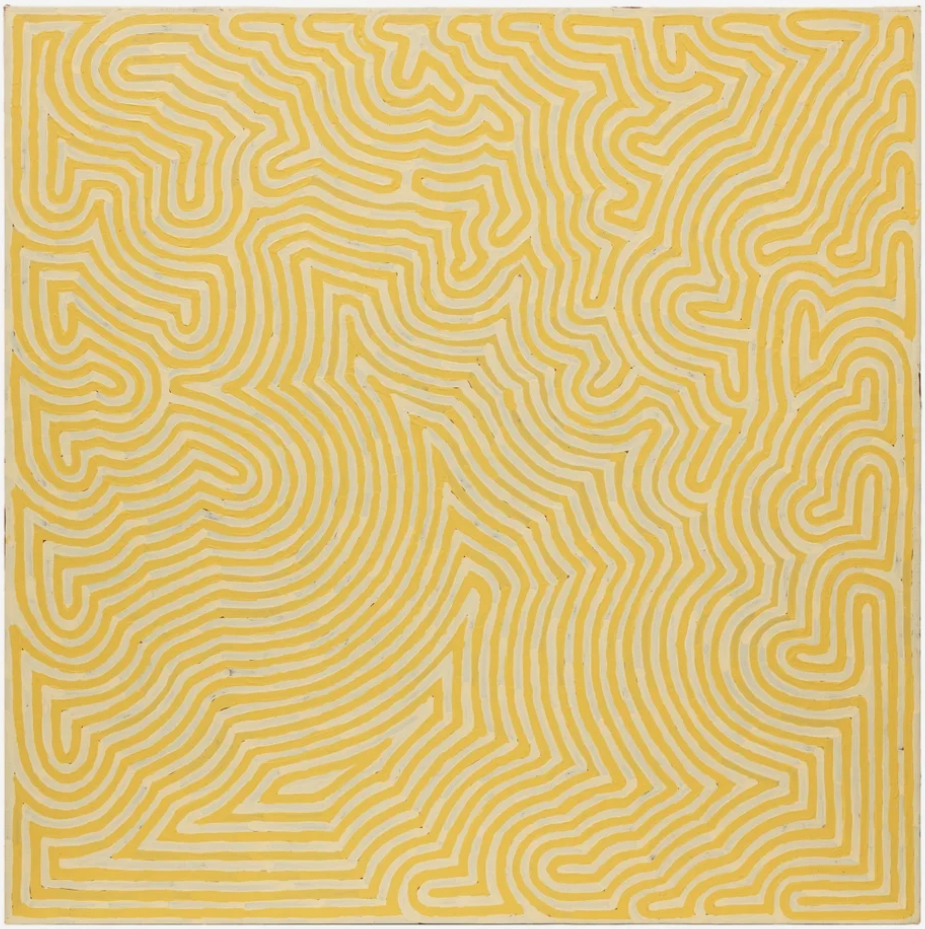


Aubrey Tjangala
Untitled, 2025
Acrylic on belgian linen
122 x 61 cm

$ 4,800

MAGMA GALLERIES
5 BEDFORD ST, COLLINGWOOD, 3066
WWW.MAGMAGALLERIES.COM

MAGMA



Aubrey Tjangala
Untitled, 2025
Acrylic on belgian linen
122 x 122 cm

$ 8,500

MAGMA GALLERIES
5 BEDFORD ST, COLLINGWOOD, 3066
WWW.MAGMAGALLERIES.COM

MAGMA



Aubrey Tjangala
Untitled, 2026
Acrylic, Belgian linen
122 × 122 cm

$8,500

MAGMA GALLERIES
5 BEDFORD ST, COLLINGWOOD, 3066
WWW.MAGMAGALLERIES.COM

MAGMA



Aubrey Tjangala
Untitled, 2026
Acrylic on belgian linen
153 x 122 cm

$ 16,000

MAGMA GALLERIES
5 BEDFORD ST, COLLINGWOOD, 3066
WWW.MAGMAGALLERIES.COM

MAGMA



Aubrey Tjangala
Untitled , 2026
Acrylic on belgium linen
183 x 152 cm

$ 20,000

MAGMA GALLERIES
5 BEDFORD ST, COLLINGWOOD, 3066
WWW.MAGMAGALLERIES.COM

MAGMA



Aubrey Tjangala
Untitled , 2026
Acrylic on Belgian linen
244 x 183 cm

$ 30,000

MAGMA GALLERIES
5 BEDFORD ST, COLLINGWOOD, 3066
WWW.MAGMAGALLERIES.COM



THANK YOU