

## Linda Puna x Unreal Fur: *Awari! (Wow!)*



Yankunytjatjara artist Linda Puna is presenting her collaboration with ethical fashion label Unreal Fur as part of her first solo exhibition *Awari! (Wow!)* at Alcaston Gallery in March 2022.

Linda has been working with Unreal Fur over the past 18 months to co-design a capsule collection of outerwear featuring the artist's unique and bold brushwork.

This collaboration between Linda Puna and Unreal Fur was facilitated by Mimili Maku Arts, a contemporary art studio and non-profit enterprise owned and governed by a board of Anangu directors.

As part of the project, Linda directed a fashion shoot on country supporting young women in Mimili Community to develop skills in photography and videography and celebrating the diversity of First Nation creative expression.

*Awari! (Wow!)* is a showcase of Linda Puna's iconic paintings, a series of unique screen prints on paper, as well as photography and video content created during the fashion shoot.

The *Linda Puna x Unreal Fur* collection will be available for sale for the first time as part of the exhibition launch event.

### **Launch Event:**

Alcaston Gallery Exhibition Space  
84 William Street  
Melbourne VIC 3000

**26<sup>th</sup> of March, 2-4pm**

The exhibition will run from 22<sup>nd</sup> of March to 29<sup>th</sup> of March 2022.

*“My name is Linda Puna. I am a Yankunytjatjara woman from the APY Lands, and carry this heritage proudly. I create unique paintings, in my distinctive and exciting style.*

*I’ve been creating unique works in my own aesthetic for many years. I paint elements of my country like witchetty grubs, water holes and trees. I also like to depict memories from my childhood, like watertanks from the outstations, music sticks, and even helicopters.*

*This year, I am presenting my own fashion line, jackets and coats designed in collaboration with Unreal Fur, and brought to life with my artwork. I am so excited about sharing my art on these jackets! It will bring joy to people in cities all around the world. I am happy to be showing the young women in my community what they can achieve through their art and by being proud in their culture!”*

– Linda Puna, 2022



**This project has been supported by the Copyright Agency and Country Arts SA.**

 Mimili Maku

### About the artist:

Linda Puna (\*1974) is a Yankunytjatjara artist living in the remote community of Mimili on the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands.

Linda spent her formative years on her homeland around Park Well. Sharing a house with her cousins, sisters and parents, Linda grew up surrounded by skilled artisans and storytellers, learning about the stories that inform her paintings today by watching and listening to the women in her family carve *punu* (wooden sculptures). The men in Linda's family were working as stockmen on the surrounding stations at the time, an experience that continues to imbue her love for loud country music, cowboys, and storytelling.

As one of the founding members of Mimili Maku Arts, Linda began bringing her stories to the canvas in 2006. Her paintings often combine *Tjukurpa* and figurative depictions of everyday community life.

As the first Anangu woman to live in a remote community whilst being dependent on an electric wheelchair, Linda shares a unique perspective on life in her artwork – full of joy, resilience, and strength. She continues to be an important and outspoken advocate for disability rights on the APY Lands.

Linda often depicts elements of the rocky desert country surrounding Mimili, referencing the *Maku* (witchetty grub) *Tjukurpa*. Her paintings combine these songlines with more figurative depictions of day-to-day objects such as Toyota 4WD vehicles, houses, cardboard boxes, windmills and water tanks. Linda uses bold brush strokes and strong colours to bring to life the reality of remote community life in a fearlessly honest and playful way.

Linda has exhibited widely both nationally and internationally, and was a finalist in the 2020 National Works on Paper Prize at the Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery. In 2022 she is celebrating her fashion debut as part of a collaboration with ethical fashion label Unreal Fur.



### **About Mimili Maku Arts:**

Mimili Maku Arts is a vibrant contemporary art studio and cultural centre owned and governed by a strong board of Anangu directors. The art centre is located in Mimili Community on the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands in the far northwest of South Australia.

Mimili Maku Arts is a place for intergenerational exchange and learning, where Anangu knowledge is celebrated, maintained and lived daily. Being a sustainable business for future generations of Anangu living in community, the art centre is a space for artistic excellence as well as a platform to support real social change and advocacy.

Working together in the communal studio space, Mimili's artists' practices have grown alongside each other. Each artist's work is as much expression of the collective storylines as it is individual artistic expression. The art centre supports some of the most celebrated contemporary painters in Australia, whilst simultaneously being a hub for community-led programs and collaborations.

Mimili Community lies within the beautiful Everard Ranges, around 500 kilometres south-west of Alice Springs. At one time known as Everard Park, a cattle station, the area was returned to Aboriginal ownership through the 1981 APY Land Rights Act. Today, Mimili is home to about 250 Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara people who refer to themselves as Anangu.

### **About Unreal Fur:**

From its roots as a family-owned label in Melbourne, Unreal Fur is passionate about changing the way people contemplate the relationship between the clothes they wear and the creatures around them. As a leader in the global ethical fashion movement, the label creates sought-after styles for everyone who wants to make more conscious choices. Unreal Fur's designs are made with quality and longevity in mind. Every garment is made to be worn season after season, always embodying a timeless cruelty-free ethos.

**Contact Mimili Maku Arts manager Anna Wattler on [info@mimilimaku.com](mailto:info@mimilimaku.com) for media enquiries or interview requests.**

**High-res photography and video content provided upon request.**

**All photographs are courtesy of Mimili Maku Arts, photographer Meg Hansen.**





Mimili Maku