Clifford POSSUM TJAPALTJARRI AO

Born c.1932 - 2002
Language Anmatyerre, Arrernte
Location Napperby, Mount Allan - Yuelumu
Community Papunya, Alice Springs
Country Karinyarra- Mount Wedge, Tjirri- Napperby Station, Mount Allan
Art Centre Papunya Tula Artists
Region Western Desert, Northern Territory
Dreamings Possum, Fire, Kangaroo, Fish, Snake, Man’s Love Story, Goanna, Water, Mala, Lightning

Clifford was born on Napperby Station. From the 1940s he carved and decorated weapons such as boomerangs and bullroarers with landscape scenes for sale to tourists. Clifford and his brother Tim Leura, also a famous artist were moved to a new settlement at Papunya, which had been established in 1959 because of the British atomic bomb tests in the Western Desert from 1955 to 1963.

Clifford and Tim Leura became members of the first group of artists to join Geoffrey Bardon’s painting group and the newly formed Papunya Tula Artists company. Clifford later became the Chairman of Papunya Tula Artists. A very quiet private man, he was generous in his gifts to his extended family. Clifford is survived by his artist children, Gabriella, Michelle and Lionel.

Collections
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, ACT, Australia
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, VIC, Australia
Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, NSW, Australia
Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, SA, Australia
Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, WA, Australia
Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, QLD, Australia
Parliament House Art Collection, Canberra, ACT, Australia
South Australian Museum, Adelaide, SA, Australia
Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide, SA, Australia
Berndt Museum of Anthropology, University of Western Australia, Perth, WA, Australia
Broken Hill Regional Art Gallery, Broken Hill, NSW, Australia
Artbank, Sydney, NSW, Australia
Federal Airports Corporation, Alice Springs Airport, Alice Springs, NT, Australia
The Holmes à Court Collection, Perth, WA, Australia
Pacific Asia Museum, Los Angeles, USA
Donald Kahn Collection, Lowe Art Museum, University of Miami, USA
The Kelton Foundation, Santa Monica, CA, USA

Publications
Vivien Johnson, The Art of Clifford Possum Tjapaltjarri, 1994

Achievements
1970s-1980s Chairman, Papunya Tula Artists Company, NT
Commissions
1985       Mural Design, Araluen Centre, Alice Springs, NT
1991       Mural - Strehlow Research Foundation, Alice Springs, NT
1991       Mural - Painting, Passenger Lounge, new Alice Springs Airport, Alice Springs, NT

Awards, Prizes
1983       The Alice Prize, Alice Springs, NT
2002       Order of Australia -AO

Ranking - Most Important Aboriginal Artists (both living and deceased)
2011       Ranked 4/100