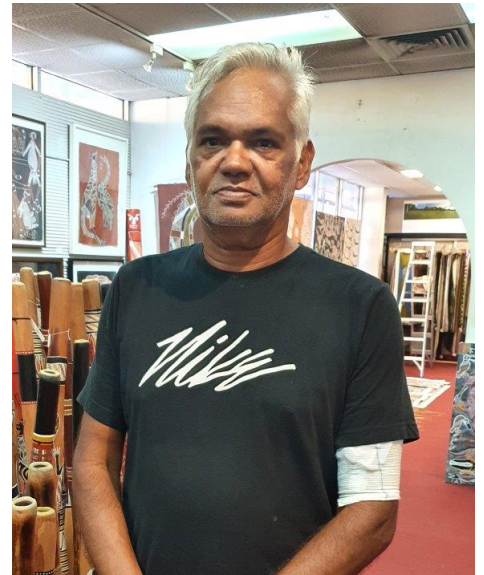


Rodney Jungala King

As a child, Rodney lived with his mother and attended school in Katherine. He would spend his school holidays with his father in Ngukurr, east of Katherine. It was during these holiday visits that Rodney first began to paint, learning from artist Kenny Wark, who also taught him how to make didgeridoos.



Rodney spent his senior years of schooling in Adelaide and then spent two and a half years working as an apprentice carpenter. He returned to the NT to spend some time working in Bulman, Arnhem Land. He worked on building contracts and general maintenance, as well as working as a shop assistant in the general store. Rodney felt he could use his skills to help develop the community and this was a worthwhile time for him. In fact, the time he spent there has influenced his style of painting today, as he paints the wildlife of the area, and the experiences which come with the bush lifestyle.

Rodney talks of having been brought up within a predominantly white cultural atmosphere. His mother didn't want him to associate with traditional Aboriginal custom. He went to a 'white' school and was encouraged to achieve his best within a white system. When Rodney was nine years old, he discovered that Aboriginal people were indigenous, which came as a big shock to a young boy who realized that he didn't really know his own cultural background.



Rodney began painting seriously after he was encouraged by Bill Harney, an established Katherine artist, who taught him to paint in the old way. He spent more time learning from older artists, Kenny Wark and also Jeffery Daly Waters.

Rodney has developed his own distinctive style, drawing from his determination to understand and follow the ways of Aboriginal tradition. Coming from a predominantly male and large family, Rodney always felt a need to be different. His mother being the one person he chose to upset the most. She encouraged her children to do their best in 'white-man's world' and sheltered her children from learning Aboriginal culture. Rodney gets great satisfaction carving the bird life of Katherine and painting them, as well as painting the other wildlife of this area.



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