



## RONALD YUNKAPORTA

The painted poles (dots and ochre covering) represent the sunset (red) the white dots represent the bubbles of salt-water when they splash on the shore.

### Born:

Ron was born in 1956 on the 9<sup>th</sup> of June in Aurukun during McKenzie time.

### Family / Country:

Ron is a Apalech (salt water) man whose is from the Wik Ngatan language group, to the south of Aurukun.

He is a Songman and senior traditional owner from the Cape Keerweer area. A place called Akaya (pronounced 'ike') which is a big white sand area and home to the 'Shark' (Papal) story place.

Ronald has a wife named Beth Ngkyunkwokka and has two girls who live in Aurukun. He also has two daughters from a previous relationship.

### Language:

Ron speaks Wik Mungkan and English, but his traditional language is Wik Ngatan.

### Totem:

Freshwater shark (Papal)

Storm bird

### Interests:

**Carving:** Ronald has become well known for his carvings in the wider art community. He has exhibits in the Modern Art Gallery in Brisbane. His work can be found at galleries in Sydney and Melbourne.

Ronald is responsible for a particular carving which is a ceremonial law-pole.

He is the owner of that knowledge surrounding these poles. Nobody else is allowed to carve these law-poles.

They are carved when a person dies. After that ,they move the poles away to be hidden, until the next time comes (someone dies) and the poles are used once more for ceremonial purposes.

If you put 6 or 8 poles together around the body, they will protect that person's spirit from harm.

He got this responsibility from his father, aunties and uncles. His big brother Salis is also responsible for these ceremonial works, however Ronald s the only one who produces them for sale.

Ron enjoys time with his family and can often be seen in the shade of a tree making spears and carvings.

### Involvement with Aurukun Wetland Charters:

Ronald sometimes participates in the Eco-charters, providing information and insight on his traditional country (to the south) and explanations of his carvings. Some are even lucky enough to hear a quick rendition of the songs performed by Ron at ceremonies.

