

# Judy Watson

Aranya Art Center North  
May 27 - November 23, 2025

Aranya Aranya Art Center North is pleased to present the first museum solo exhibition in China by Australian Waanyi artist Judy Watson, featuring large-scale paintings and video works created between 2019 and 2023.

The indigo tones that often appear in Watson's work are carriers of her family and ancestral memories, while the ochre symbolizes connections to land and blood. She is a descendant of the Waanyi people of Northwest Queensland. Her matrilineal Aboriginal history and her family's images of women form an important wellspring of creative inspiration in her work. The Waanyi are known as the "running water people." Water is not only a symbol of life but also a carrier of memory, which is why it is a frequently recurring theme in Watson's work. Watson's creations are tied together by individual and collective memory, through which she continuously explores the persistence and echos of identity and historical memory.

Watson layers her pictures with graphic elements such as maps, temperature curves, and land contours. Water pollution, watershed loss, and soil erosion are the pathways through which she perceives climate change, and an important medium in her response to colonial violence. The "spine" and "standing stone" motifs that emerge in her works refer to sacred forms and parts of the body, symbolizing the transmission and resistance of Indigenous cultures, and with a monumental permanence, assert that the ghosts of colonial history have never receded.

This exhibition is organized by Assistant Curator Gao Liangjiao and Associate Curator Wu Yiyang at the Aranya Art Center.



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[www.aranyaartcenter.com/](http://www.aranyaartcenter.com/)  
10:00 – 18:00, Tuesday to Sunday  
0335 782 5660  
W30, Binhe Commercial Street, Aranya North Coast  
Beidaihe New District, Qinhuangdao, Hebei Province, China

## About the artist

Judy Watson

Born in 1959 in Mundubbera, Queensland; lives and works in Brisbane.

Exhibiting extensively since the 1980s, Watson co-represented Australia at the 1997 Venice Biennale and won the Works on Paper Award at the 23rd National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Award in 2006. She was also the recipient of the National Gallery of Victoria's 2006 Clemenger Contemporary Art Award. In 2011, Watson's exhibition *waterline* was shown at the Embassy of Australia in Washington DC, and in 2012, she exhibited in the Sydney Biennale. In 2018, the Art Gallery of New South Wales staged a major exhibition of her work titled *the edge of memory*. Her work is also included in several significant Australian and international collections, including all of Australia's state institutions, the National Gallery of Australia, the Tokyo National University of Technology, the Taipei Fine Arts Museum, the British Museum, and MCA / TATE.

## About Aranya Art Center

Aranya Art Center is a kunsthalle for contemporary art, powered by Aranya, a seaside community in Beidaihe, China. Its architecture is designed by Neri&Hu. Its heavy volume, dark facade and concrete wall tiles with different textures make the exterior of the art center look like a tough rock. The spiral staircases inside the building connect the open-air atrium at the bottom with each exhibition gallery.

Since its opening in May 2019, the Aranya Art Center has presented more than 20 exhibitions, including group exhibitions *Long Day*, *Études*, *How Far*, *How Close*, *Studio Visits*, and *Paint for Life!*, as well as comprehensive museum exhibitions of Anselm Reyle, Sylvie Fleury, Tao Hui, Gabriel Kuri, Jiang Zhi, Yuko Mohri, and Trevor Yeung.

Aranya Art Center's first branch, Aranya Art Center North, opened on September 22, 2024.



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