Anzus Aboriginal Art. P O Box 578, Palo Alto, California 94302. (650) 321 2121 [www.aboriginalartgalleries.com](http://www.aboriginalartgalleries.com)

**The SEVEN SISTERS.**

In many primitive cultures the stars are associated with numerous Gods, or spirits and form the basis of many myths and folk tales. Australian aborigines are no different and stars are a very important part of their creation stories, or Dreamtime.

A common story involving stars is about seven sisters, who to escape from an old man pursuing them, use magic to flee into the sky. The sisters are still there today, travelling across the Milky Way as the Pleiades Constellation. They are still being pursued by the old man in the form 0f Orion, the morning star.

Although a few aboriginal men paint the Seven Sisters, the story is a women’s story and the majority of artists who paint the “Seven Sisters” are women.

There are many versions of the story which varies throughout Australia from language group to language group. These stories are part of the aboriginal Dreaming.

Depending on the area, the Seven Sisters can be “sky women”, “water girls”, or just girls gathering food or wandering as part of their group initiation. The man pursuing them was often old, sometimes lazy, or hungry, or lustful, sometimes noble, sometimes sly, sometimes just a hunter. Magic and fire are common in the stories and often an important part of the story. The fires carried into the sky become the stars. Magic or spirits are the means by which the sisters manage to escape up the Milky Way.

The website [www.aboriginalartgalleries.com](http://www.aboriginalartgalleries.com) has several “Seven Sisters” paintings from different areas in Australia. The paintings are by various artists including two men. Since the artists are from different language groups the stories vary from painting to painting.