Our homelands and Art Centres are our universities and art academies, though they are not funded for this role. Homelands are where our young people learn our culture, all our songs, clan designs and patterns, dances, kinship, names and stories. Our homelands are where we hold Ngarra, holy ceremonies that honour our spiritual foundation on our land and sea country. These are really big gatherings that bring together people from many clans. It is where we go much more deeply into our sacred places and lands. These ceremonies are what feeds our art, makes it strong and lets it speak of what I am, who we are. People can feel this in our art. The land cannot talk, but we can speak for it through our artwork and reach across cultures.

Homelands are the backbone for Aboriginal art. They are where all the patterns and designs come from - from the land.

Homelands and Art

ANKA: Working Together to Keep Art, Culture and Country Strong
By Christina Davidson, ANKA CEO

Homelands Movement

ANKA is a fully Indigenous governed not-for-profit Aboriginal Corporation based in the Kimberley, Arnhem Land, Tiwi Islands and Katherine/Darwin regions of Northern Australia. ANKA is a specially designated governing not-for-profit Aboriginal Corporation. Founded in 1987, ANKA is Australia’s first peak body for Indigenous art.

The name of 729 homelands centres in ANKA’s regions of northern Australia are listed on the cover of this Homelands Edition of Arts Backbone. The map on p.22-23 charts their locations. This map reminds us visually that the country between the big Aboriginal settlements in Northern Australia is not empty, but is full of art and culture. The map shows not just the Art Centres which market, and help nurture, sustain and preserve Aboriginal art, but also the homelands centres where much of the art is produced and which are the conceptual heartlands of the Aboriginal art movement. ANKA’s Homelands Keeping Art, Country and Culture Strong Mapping Project is introduced on p.26.

‘Homelands’ are referenced in two main ways in this Arts Backbone. The first is homelands on ancestral country. Referring to the individual ancestral clan estates (the country) of the diverse Aboriginal peoples of northern Australia whose families have cared for their land since time immemorial (75,000 years by current science). The second way homelands is used, refers to homeland centres - small contemporary Aboriginal settlements where people dwell. Often also called outstations or blackstone country, these settlements are typically located on or close to people’s ancestral country.

The contemporary Aboriginal Art Movement, which has so captured the imaginations and hearts of Australian and international audiences over the last 50 years, is intimately linked to the Homelands Movement. This Homelands Movement in northern Australia, was the return of Aboriginal people, from the late 1960s, to live on the country they had been displaced from under the violence of colonialism.

The homelands movement of the 1970s and 1980s was the source of a determined Indigenous lead to bring Australia together with a new vision for the future. As the 1980s House of Representatives Inquiry - Return to Country: The Aboriginal Homelands Movement in Australia, took a very positive view of homeland centres and their futures. However, the tendency in policy since has been to view homelands though a deficit lens as a drain on the public purse. Rather than appreciating the very significant strengths of homelands and homeland people, and the many benefits they offer for Australia, including in land care, art, and in developing understanding of the continent and national identity.

In 2019-2020 the time is ripe for a fundamental rethink of the role of homelands and what they have to offer Australia as a whole in an era when technology means they are no longer ‘remote’ to other places. Today homeland centres are developing a large range of new projects under challenging conditions. Among many other enterprises, homelands are the places of origin of two important contemporary international exports: Indigenous art and the land management/carbon abatement projects, reported on p.19.

It is time to listen to the Indigenous voices, who have been patiently explaining the importance of homelands for the last 50 years and longer. It is time to pay respect to the people creating art, including artists, who voted with their feet walking back to their homelands and who continue to work to make it viable to live there.

Homeland Movement

Homeland Movement - lyrics
Back in the 1970s there was movement on the land
Yolngu people moved back to their promised land
The wheel was a turning
And the feeling was right
Dreamtime people returned to their land
Power to the people
Power to the land
Power for cultural revival
Power for survival
See the camp fire burning
And the children are yearning
Talking about peace and harmony
Yolngu education is the key for redemption
And the homeland centre movement is here to stay
Power to the People
Power to the land
Power for cultural revival
Power for survival

Homeland Movement - illustration

Homeland Movement - the story

Homeland Movement is Yothu Yindi’s first album released in March 1989 on the Mushroom Record label. Illustrations Gulapa Screenprints. Reproduced with permission.

Power to the People
Power to the land
Power for cultural revival
Power for survival

Homeland Movement

Homeland Movement is Yothu Yindi’s first album released in March 1989 on the Mushroom Record label. Illustrations Gulapa Screenprints. Reproduced with permission.

Power to the People
Power to the land
Power for cultural revival
Power for survival

Homeland Movement - the story

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Power to the People
Power to the land
Power for cultural revival
Power for survival

Homeland Movement
Chris Griffiths

Our father, Alan Griffiths, was the lead claimant, representing five clan groups who came together from the Ngaliwuru and Nungali peoples. But like Eddie Mabo and many other old people who have fought for country, our father passed away before the final ruling. Losing our old fella leaves us feeling stranded, lost and confused. He was our leader and our teacher. But he passed his knowledge to us through story, through his paintings, his song and dance, and through ceremony and law — and we carry it on. Chris Griffiths is carrying our law, Dora Griffiths carries on the old man’s painting of country, Jan Griffiths carries on his station stories in her ceramic art, and so many of our family carry on his song and dance.

Our father’s country extends from Timber Creek into much of the country covered by Victoria River Downs Station. But our father married into Miriwoong Country where he lived for much of his life. On Miriwoong country, painting became a way for him to connect to his own country and in his older age he produced over 2500 works depicting hundreds of sites and little known histories on country around Timber Creek and VRD.

One of our father’s paintings was used as evidence in this compensation case. It depicts our Makalamayi country around Timber Creek, illustrating where the dingo’s hat sits and his final resting place; a Blowfly Dreaming; our ceremony ground; Flat Rock where the shark and barramundi had an argument; our wiman - trade routes; and the walking log. Much of Timber Creek was built on these sacred sites at a time when we had no rights over country and our Dreamings weren’t recognised.

Our father’s painting helped our relationship to country, and the damage done to it, become much clearer to a gardiya (whitefella) system of law. The judges of the High Court likened the damage done to specific parts of our country to the damage caused to a painting with multiple holes punched into its surface. The damage needs to be understood not by reference to each hole, but to the affect those holes have on the wider surface of the painting, and our country.

This High Court decision paves the way for other Aboriginal people around Australia to be compensated for the loss and hurt caused by damage to country. May it be a small step in the long continuing journey to set things right.

‘We’ve bin’ waiting a long time for houses, but that didn’t take away our spirit. It’s good to see our houses getting built now. It’s important for us to be on our own country, making our own art with our family, so our next generations never forget who we are and where we come from.’

Peggy Griffiths and Jan Griffiths

Jiylinum is the Dreaming site of a hill kargoano and the home and studio workplace of nationally recognised artists Peggy Griffiths, her late husband Alan Griffiths and their family, many of whom work through Waringarri Aboriginal Arts.

Located about 40km from Kununurra on the WA/NT border, the Griffiths have been living on this block for over 15 years in tin sheds and old caravans because of their determination to be on country and away from the humbug of town. Thanks to funding from the Aboriginal Benefits Account the Griffiths are currently upgrading the living and working conditions on Jiylinum and will have new infrastructure and solar power very soon. Jiylinum is on the ancestral country of Peggy Griffiths. The land was meant to be handed back to Peggy in the early 2000s, but it was delayed by a technicality, that meant title could not be handed over without permanent access to water. For over a decade the Griffiths carted water in on an old trailer. After connecting to a bore in 2015 through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with National Parks and the support of the NIC, the land was finally and formally returned.

The plan is to have more children and people living on the block in 2020 supporting their health, well-being, employment and education opportunities by nurturing their access to country.
Molly Nayilibidj Marebu, pandanus and natural dyes, 2019

Molly Nayilibidj lives and works at Mamadawerre Outstation on the West Arnhem Land Plateau. She exhibits and sells through Injalak Arts, Gunbalanya.

West Arnhem Land is home to 15 outstations resourced through Demed Aboriginal Corporation, Gunbalanya. Injalak Arts supports many artists living and working on these outstations.

Our foundation is Yolngu Rom (law and cultural principals). Our foundation for development is the people, our identity, our culture and our land – all linked together under Yolngu Rom. Our patterns and designs, our language and our stories live in homelands, not in settlements. This is why we want our future in homelands.

The Blue Mud Bay (Djalkiripuyngu) Development Strategy, 2018

The homelands of Blue Mud Bay in North East Arnhem Land are the places of production of much of the great art made in northern Australia over the last half century. Artworks from these small homeland centres are collected and exhibited by leading art institutions and private collectors across the world.

The homeland centres at Blue Mud Bay started in the 1970s. The largest - Baniyala/Yilpara was established in 1972 when the great Madarrpa Clan leader and artist Wakuthi Marawili (1921-2005) walked back with his people to their ancestral country from the Rose River Mission at Numbulwar.

Today Baniyala/Yilpara and the surrounding homelands are what current Madarpa Clan leader Djambawa Marawili AM calls a set of ‘suburbs’ that together form a distributed Djalkiripuyngu ‘town’. A neighbourhood of people with ancient interconnected histories for preceding the homelands movement itself.

Concurrently Doctor Gumana (c.1933-2016), Dhalwangu Clan leader and renowned artist, founded nearby Gangan with his father, revered artist Birrikitji Gumana (c.1898-1982). Djarraipi and Wawandawu were started at the same time and later Runarrgala, Dhuruputji Balma, Bararratji, Baygururrri and Gurkawuy homeland centres.

Today Baniyala/Yilpara and the surrounding homelands are what current Madarpa Clan leader Djambawa Marawili AM calls a set of ‘suburbs’ that together form a distributed Djalkiripuyngu ‘town’. A neighbourhood of people with ancient interconnected histories for preceding the homelands movement itself.

Frances and Howard Morphy explain that after the Mission Time (1935-1970), Blue Mud Bay homeland centres allowed: ‘Yolngu to re-emplace a regional system of relationships (gurrutu) that had been disrupted in the early decades of the twentieth century as the region came increasingly under Australian Government control.’

The Blue Mud Bay (Djalkiripuyngu) Development Strategy, 2018 (p.8) and current business planning show the determination of the Djalkiripuyngu (footprint people) for locally-driven homelands development. Working together to build the regional economy and viable futures for their families caring for country and culture.

Today, through their art and other activities, Djalkiripuyngu are both vitally interlinked with the wider contemporary world and bound to their ancestral language, culture and land. Homelands at Blue Mud Bay, not settlements at Yirrkala or cities further afield, are the centre of their world. They invite other Australians to support this journey.

Our homelands are where we hold Ngarra, holy ceremonies that honour our spiritual foundation on our land and sea country. These are really big gatherings that bring together people from many clans. It is where we go much more deeply into our sacred places and lands. These ceremonies are what feeds our art, makes it strong and lets it speak of what I am, who we are.

Djambawa Marawili AM, 2010

Buku-Larrnggay Mulka, Yirrkala, represents artists of the Djalkiripuyngu homelands.

Blue Mud Bay (Djalkiripuynu) Development Strategy
By Djambawa Marawili AM, Blue Mud Bay, North East Arnhem Land

By Djambawa Marawili AM

Our foundation is Yolngu Rom (Law and cultural principles)
Our foundation for development is the people, our identity, our culture and our land – all linked together under Yolngu Rom. Our patterns and designs, our language and our stories live in homelands, not in settlements. This is why we want our future in homelands.

We are committed to our self-determination
Our development is based on strong gurrgurr, drawing power from our Rom to make local decisions for our lands and seas.

Our only way to grow is through equal rights and responsibilities
Without this, we’ve can only grow grass in the galmarriny.

Long term outcomes only come from locally driven development
Our development requires a strong rumbal to take the power from our munatha and combine it with the waltjan and daykun to grow the borum.

We appreciate public funds and support
Waltjan (public funds) carries the power in the munatha and daykun up the rumbal to combine with the energy of the daykun to make the borum.

We want a future of dignity on our traditional lands
The success of our development strategy will be measured by its borum:
• greater local employment opportunities;
• higher education levels;
• financial stability;
• improved living standards;
• people living with dignity on our traditional lands.

Private investment provides the energy to innovate
While waltjan starts our growth, the energy of the daykun (private investment) makes us flourish.

We want to protect what is important
Our greatest challenge is managing groups who have vested interests in the status quo taking advantage of our confusion and broken by selfishness.

Our children and grandchildren will lead our development
Strong gurrgurr and rumbal withstands the wuthanginy. Our development will need to be strong and flexible enough to withstand the generational change coming in the next 5 years.

Our foundation for development is the people, our identity, our culture and our land – all linked together under Yolngu Rom. Our patterns and designs, our language and our stories live in homelands, not in settlements. This is why we want our future in homelands.

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• greater local employment opportunities;
• higher education levels;
• financial stability;
• improved living standards;
• people living with dignity on our traditional lands.

Homelands provide a deep and well established system of cultural, geographical and commercial interconnection.

Homelands are not isolated remote places of deficit, but part of a living network of people and places that formed the foundations of the Australian economy for millennia.

Homelands were settled by our fathers and mothers to provide safe cultural places for the growth of our families, management of our resources, and interaction across our region.

Homelands are places of knowledge, reflection, discipline and innovation – and are where our stories, song lines, sacred patterns and designs come from.

Homelands are not just outstations, missions or settlements - they are important cultural places to hunt, places to live, places of law, places of songs, patterns and designs, places of ceremony, places to rest, places of truth, places of language, places with names and identity, places to thrive.

Homelands are where people live healthy and strong lives and want to grow prosperity – not in isolation but for their connected families and communities.

Homelands provide a real opportunity for economic and social development and growth in Northern Australia – where our knowledge and deep connection between people and place has already stimulated many successful businesses in agriculture, aquaculture, land management, mining and even space.

Homelands provide a real opportunity for economic and social development and growth in Northern Australia – where our knowledge and deep connection between people and place has already stimulated many successful businesses in agriculture, aquaculture, land management, mining and even space.

Homelands have a clarity of leadership and vision that is based in ngarra.

Whereas leadership in major communities are frequently undermined by confusion and broken by selfishness.

Homelands represent a deep and well established system of cultural, geographical and commercial interconnection.

Homelands are places of strength and opportunity
Homelands are places of strength and opportunity
Homelands are places of strength and opportunity
In June 2018 Milingimbi Art and Culture organised a ten day weaving camp at Yilan on the West Arnhem Land coast. The camp, hosted by Bonnie Burangarra and Freda Wyartja, on their mother’s country and homeland, focused on Angidjatjiya, a traditional fish trap made from Milarr (jungle vine).

Yilan homeland has an intimate connection through songline and kinship to Milingimbi and its artists. Yilan is located on the West Arnhem Land coast close to the mouth of the Blythe River. The Ngokal (giant trevally) connects close to the mouth of the Blythe River. The Ngokal (giant trevally) connects.

The Ngokal swims as far as Djamalpi (Cape Shield) on the far east coast of Arnhem Land and then back to Yilan. On its journey it links together country including Milingimbi and Langarra (Howard Island). Yilan is the sister country for Milingimbi and Langarra as each of these places, although geographically separate, are linked by the one mother and the Ngokal’s raki.

Yilan Homeland is the home and ancestral country of Bonnie Burangarra, Freda Wyartja and Lily Roy (ANKA Director). In May 2018 Bonnie, Freda and Lily invited a group of Milingimbi Art and Culture weavers to their Homeland. For half of the group this was an opportunity to return to the homeland where they had grown up, these artists called Yilan ‘Ngama’ (mother) or ‘Maari’ (mother’s mother). For the other half it was a chance to visit and exchange knowledge with the people and country that had intimate connection to their home and mothers homeland of Langarra, these weavers also called Yilan ‘Ngandi’ (mother).

During the ten days at Yilan the artists watched, assisted and learnt Angidjatjiya (jungle vine fish trap) making from Bonnie, Freda and Lily.

Ruth Nalmakarra of Langarra Homeland explained that because her family lived so close to the mission at Elcho Island her and her sisters had not learnt the art of fish trap making from Milarr (jungle vine). This was because the missionaries discouraged the making of functional items. Sabrina Ray, daughter of Lily Ray, shared stories of growing up at Yilan and explained that once she moved to Milingimbi as a teenager she no longer had the opportunity to practice making Angidjatjiya as Milarr has limited habitat to grow on the small island.

Milingimbi Art and Culture is committed to supporting artists on homelands and assisting with maintaining connection to homelands through harvesting practices, artist camps and special projects. This would not be possible without the incredible support of many, in particular that provided by the Crocodile Island Rangers.

Bonne Burangarra and Freda Wyartja are master weavers represented by Milingimbi Arts and Milingimbi Art and Culture.

Remote Artists are Empowering their Economy

By David Throsby and Katya Petetskaya

The survey began in the Kimberley in 2015 and has now covered three more regions in the Northern Territory and South Australia. It is planned that all regions will be completed in 2021. It is the first comprehensive survey of individual art practice in remote areas that has ever been undertaken in Australia.

The survey aims to provide nationally representative data on how individual artists in remote Australia establish, maintain and develop their professional art practice. Our findings so far demonstrate that artistic and cultural production is a source of economic development in remote settlements in Australia, and at the same time maintains and enhances the practice and revitalisation of Indigenous cultural traditions and customs.

The survey documents the multiple cultural activities that artists undertake – in addition to making art, they are involved in teaching, cultural governance, archiving, interpreting, providing cultural tourism services, and more.

Many ANKA members will know of the National Survey of Remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Artists that David Throsby and Katya Petetskaya of Macquarie University have been implementing over the last four years.

The survey results emphasise the importance of support organisations such as ANKA and underline the significant role played by Art Centres in the art economy of remote regions.

Living remotely does not mean a lack of engagement with the outside world. Artists who work from remote locations travel and sell their art works Australia-wide and nationally, participate in research, and also engage in commercial ventures such as selling bush medicine and cosmetics. Additionally, cultural tourism brings visitors from different parts of the world to these remote places where Indigenous culture can be experienced in the most direct and authentic way.

Our data demonstrates the importance of artists’ connections with their homelands. The survey provides compelling evidence in support of the need for securing artists’ access to country, if art and culture are to become a stronger source of economic empowerment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia.

For electronic copies of the completed reports contact: katya.petetskaya@mq.edu.au or david.throsby@mq.edu.au

"The survey provides compelling evidence in support of the need for securing artists’ access to country, if art and culture are to become a stronger source of economic empowerment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia."
Reinvigorating the MECA Collection is a collaboration between Milingimbi Art and Culture and CDU University Art Collection and Art Gallery. It brings together a stunning selection of 64 works from the Milingimbi Education and Cultural Association (MECA) Collection created in Milingimbi, Arnhem Land in the mid-1970s.

There is a long history behind this exhibition, which opened in March at CDU Gallery, Darwin. Daughter of renowned artist Binyinyuwuy and Milingimbi Art and Culture Chairperson, Judy Lirririnyin remembers the old people ‘were sitting all together, sharing with each other. They used to sell all their bark paintings in the old mission shop.

'Gupapuyuyu Liyagalawumiri, Djinaj, Gamathiny, Mandjakay, Djambargpyuyu, Mildjiy, Garrawurra, Gamalanga, and many other clans sitting together and painting,’ adds Joe Dhamanydji, son of Gupapuyuyu leader Djawua.

'There was also a lot of people living at Njalgolala and other homelands, in that time, this was before Ramingining.' And then in the 1970s when David McClay, David Morgan and Michael Christie were working at the school they got some money from the Aboriginal Arts Board to buy art works for a community education collection. This was to make sure all the stories and designs were remembered by all the young people in the future. There were around 300 art works and artefacts collected.

Years on, in the mid 1980s, someone sold these art works to the Northern Territory Government. After a long dispute, the NT Government recognised that the community still owned the art works. They have been stored at the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory ever since.

There was also a lot of people living at Njalgolala and other homelands, in that time, this was before Ramingining.

‘We want a proper museum building here to put those paintings in on the community. So we can keep our culture strong and healthy for future generations. So we can be with those art works and teach our kids’ says Judy Lirririnyin.

Milingimbi Art and Culture thanks CDU, MAGNT, The Tim Fairfax Foundation and old friends of MECA.

Yolngu have been talking for years about bringing these art works home. ‘We want a proper museum building here to put those paintings in on the community. So we can keep our culture strong and healthy for future generations. So we can be with those art works and teach our kids’ says Judy Lirririnyin.

Milingimbi Art and Culture thanks CDU, MAGNT, The Tim Fairfax Foundation and old friends of MECA.

By Judy Lirririnyin, Chair Milingimbi Art and Culture

Yow this is really a privilege. I’m really thanks all of you that you came to be with us. So my knowledge that I have been with my fathers, my grandfathers, my uncles, that they taught me for everything and they gave me the knowledge for these paintings. It’s not just a paint but see this, this is our real culture, the dreams, spirit, land. All their stories it’s teach all the young people about discipline. And we want to teach them more and give our knowledge to them for their future, so they can hold future really strong and their fathers’ value, to keep their memory.

This is just as real, all these dreams, paintings, we sing, we cry, think about our own family that passed, that are present and the future. This is real, this is not just a past and everything got all the stories, all stories. And you know I’m very thinking my uncles I’ve got my uncle is here James Gaykamayu, he’s from knowledge. I’m here standing in front of him, watching me. He gave me discipline in my value, and his father, and I’m standing here. I’m really thanking all of you with my heart.

Transcription - Michael Christie

Above: David McClay, Principal of Milingimbi School 1971-1979 with Milingimbi Art and Culture Chairperson Judy Lirririnyin. Photo: Nichole Taylor, courtesy CDU Art Gallery

Left: Unknown artists, Gilitjirrk (looped string bag), M050; Bathi (twined conical basket/dilly bag), M20; Bathi Mindir (twined conical basket/ceremonial dilly bag), M27B; Bathi Mindir (twined conical basket/ceremonial dilly bag), M27B. Photos: Installation shots by Fiona Morrison.

Bottom Left: Installation shot.

Top Left: Installation shot.

Installation shot.
Aboriginal Art and Outstations: Then and Now
By Jon Altman

Then is 1979 and 1980 when I lived with members of the Kuninjku-speaking community in Western Arnhem Land. Now is the present, 2019.

In this short piece I want to reflect on a paradox: Kuninjku art, like Aboriginal art more generally, is today renowned and highly valued domestically and internationally; it is no secret that many Indigenous people in remote Australia who enjoy land and native title rights paint elements of their spiritual and political connections to their country.

And yet despite Indigenous peoples’ land title to more and more of the continent under Australian law, living on one’s country and depicting one’s country in visual art is getting more and more difficult.

When Kuninjku people at Mumeka Outstation allowed me to live with them as a doctoral student, I soon found out how central art production and sale was to their livelihood and identity. The first paper I wrote about art in April 1980 was called ‘Art and craft and the Momega (outstation) economy’. It was presented to an Aboriginal Arts Board conference convened in Maningrida in conjunction with Maningrida Arts and Crafts. All adults at Mumeka made some art for sale including artists like Johnny Mawurndjul, Melba Gundjarwanga, Kay Lindjuwangga and Susan Marrawar, all still practicing; and famous deceased artists like Jimmy Njiminjuma, James Iyuna and their father Anchor Kulunba. Life at outstations was basic, corrugated iron and bark shelters, no reticulated water, no toilets, no power, no phones. But art blossomed—it was one of the mainstays of the economy alongside hunting, fishing and gathering of wild foods and some welfare payments.

Art was collected every fortnight by the arts adviser. Except for axes and knives and aquadhere glue, all the materials for making art came from the bush, people produced art inspired by country, sacred places, the totemic species they hunted and celebrated in ceremonies. They enjoyed a degree of economic autonomy.

Today a major retrospective of Mawurndjul’s art ‘I am the Old and the New’ is touring Australia. But Mawurndjul laments that being the new is a lot harder and less desirable than the old. He recently told me ‘What makes me happy is when I can go to my home out bush … I can paint …’. I can see what he means when I visit. Living at outstations is a lot more difficult for Kuninjku people today. Basic citizenship services like education and health are provided in the township of Maningrida. People are required to work for the dole, for an impoverishing pitance, and half that welfare money is put on the BasicsCard tying people to shops. Since the Intervention there has been no new housing at outstations; it is difficult to obtain guns for hunting and vehicles to collect art materials because of excessive police scrutiny. To quote Mawurndjul again, ‘I have still got the same law, but the government keeps changing their rules’.

What Kuninjku experienced is happening across remote Australia. Rather than being assisted to live on country and paint what might be understood in western terms as ‘en plein air’, outdoors, artists are being separated from their sources of inspiration as the government looks to recentralise them. This policy shift is killing the aspirations of many to live on their ancestral lands, the key source of inspiration for their arts practice. On-country living and arts production were possible 40 years ago. In super-rich Australia it should be even more possible today. A deep cultural tradition is at stake and at risk: the thinking and policy of the powerful, who like art and often buy it for private and public collections, need to change quickly and profoundly.

Jon Altman is an emeritus professor at the Australian National University. In 1989 he chaired a national review of the Aboriginal visual arts sector for the Australian government.
To Always Be Part of that Land - Tamitipi Homeland Bush Camp
By Teddy Portaminni

Is there housing at Tamitipi?
Before there was nothing there. But as the years go along, I got funding from the NT Government and from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. They gave me funding to build things up there: showers, toilets. This year, the house, the caretakers cottage, is up there, and two shipping containers. In the containers I store all the things I need for the camps.

What is the future for the homeland? I want to stay there permanently so I can look after the camp and the country, keeping our culture strong and teaching. Like my grandfather lived a long time ago. I want to live like him there.

And to always be part of that land? Yes, always be part of that land.

Interview with John Saunders

Ancestral Connections - Mitchell Falls
By Angelina Guluwulla Karadada Boona, Co-Manager Kira Kiro Arts, Kulumburu

Kira Kiro Arts is based at Kalumburu, the northernmost settlement in Western Australia.

Mitchell Falls, is very far away from Kalumburu, we have to go by boat because there is no road to my Country. People started living there a long time ago, there are no houses, but there is a hut, no one lives there but they take tourists there to see the rock paintings, my nephews sometimes help with this. People go there during the tourist season, June/July each year and sometimes we can get there by helicopter with the tourists.

Some artists go there to paint, the Kandival people, we make art there, we cut bark from the trees for paintings and we’ll light a fire and treat it there.

Homelands are important to keep the rock art, to see where the old people lived, where they camped, made their corroborees, their sacred sites, to keep the connection to the old people. This connection is present in my art, my art is a story about my homeland and culture.

We get some support from the Kalumburu Aboriginal Corporation and Wunambal Gaamberra to hold corroborees and events on our homeland, we smoke the people that come in and go out. It would be good to get more support for the homeland, to upgrade the roads, more buildings, we would also like to keep the homeland untouched, clean with no rubbish.

It would be wonderful to build a workshop or artist’s studio so artists can paint there and tourists can learn about our culture. Then we can sell our art to help maintain and promote our homelands.

‘In the 80s, we used to live at our outstation or homelands. We go there mainly to hunt and do some fishing and gather bush tucker that is good and healthy for us.

Now we don’t go because we don’t have any car to go out.

This painting is about the freedom that we had back then and what I miss today.’
Alan Joshua JNR
Le: Alan Joshua JNR, Homeland 2018, Acrylic on Canvas, 140x116cm
Numburindi: Strengthening Culture and Country

This three-year project connects young people from Numbulwar with their culture, country and homelands through a series of bush camps guided by elders.

Founded as a township in 1952 when the Rose River Mission was established, Numbulwar became self-managed in 1976. There are currently 350 residents and several others not permanently inhabited.

Elders of the Nundhirribala, Manringun, Ngalmi and Nunggargal clan are leading cultural camps, teaching the children to hunt, collect bush Tucker, and learn songlines, language and dance, building bridges to traditional knowledge.

‘My grandparents lived out here in Miwul before the mission came and pulled everyone to Numbulwar.’

Grant Nundhirribala

Initiated by Grant Nundhirribala, Artistic Director of the Numburindi Festival, the project is managed through Artback NT with funding from the Tim Fairfax Family Foundation. The first camps were held in 2018.

The camps mean that young people can learn on country, without the distractions of town. Grant Nundhirribala, explains: ‘If you do teaching kids in town, big mob things happening in town, people are distracted, it’s good for me to take the kids camping, away.’

Highlights of the camps so far have included a trip to Miwul hosted by traditional owner Henry Nunggargalbarnji. Children visited the billabong with elders Rosanne Nundhirribala and Anne Marie Nundhirribala.

‘The rainbow serpent made this place; the billabong, it always has water, never dries out.’

Anne-Marie Nundhirribala

For more information contact Eve Pawlik at Artback NT projects@artbacknt.com.au

Left: Duwayne Nundhirribala at the billabong at Miwul with elders Rosanne Nundhirribala and Anne Marie Nundhirribala. Photo: Eve Pawlik

Northern Australian Homelands Export
Fire Knowledge
By Sam Johnson and Ari Gorring

‘Country Needs People’ Campaign
Indigenous ranger jobs and Indigenous Protected Areas help country, culture and community to be healthy.

The Country Needs People campaign celebrates homelands’ essential role in caring for the Australian continent.

Homelands are at the heart of two world leading models of success – Indigenous rangers and Indigenous Protected Areas (IPA). From Tennant Creek to Tasmania, the Kimberley to Cape York, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are protecting natural and cultural heritage through Indigenous ranger jobs and Indigenous Protected Areas.

The work being done by rangers on IPs isn’t only about tackling environmental threats like feral animals, invasive weeds and destructive wildfires. Work includes monitoring and protecting cultural sites like rock art galleries, and fostering culture by enabling young people and old people to access places together to exchange learning about language, art, stories, bush Tucker and more. Rangers and Indigenous Protected Areas support homeland communities because people can access meaningful work, strengthen culture and reinvigorate surrounding land and sea country.

The Country Needs People campaign is an alliance of 40 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations that work on land and sea management, alongside the Pew Charitable Trusts and more than 90 000 Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. Together, the alliance is calling on the government to double funding and secure a long term future for Indigenous rangers and Indigenous Protected Areas.

To join the Country Needs People call to grow and secure the future of Indigenous rangers and Indigenous Protected Areas, visit countryneedspeople.org.au

Wildfire is a major threat to property, lives and biodiversity. Climate change will make all these impacts worse. Conventional methods of firefighting have failed.

Indigenous people in Australia living on homelands have developed a sustainable solution to this threat. Using their knowledge with modern science and satellites, they burn early, keep fuel loads down and dramatically reduce destructive wildfires.

First used in West Angham land in 2006, it is now used across Northern Australia.

The International Savanna Fire Management Initiative (ISFMI) and its network partners has shown how this approach could be used around the world, especially, in fire prone landscapes such the savannas of Africa.

From the 11 to 21 May 2019 the ISFMI hosted a delegation of Indigenous rangers and leading fire scientists from Northern Australia into Botswana. Over the ten days knowledge of fire and traditional fire management practices were shared with the people of Botswana. Further information: isfmi.org

‘The Botswanans were blown away by the Aussies’ skills.’ I feel really good knowing that I passed on something.’ ‘When they were trying to put out a fire, they’d be running around, lots of people and fire trucks, not much leadership and not much knowledge of fire, and it ended up a real big hot fire’ ‘But for us, we used the wind, and ours was less intense, less heat, hardly any smoke.’ ‘We’re different cultures, but for both of us, fire is so important, and once upon a time a fire regime in Australia was the best in the world I reckon.’

Robin Dann, Wunggurr ranger from Gibb River Station

Top Left: Grant Nundhirribala and Henry Nunggargalbarnji with Deonrie and Clancy Nundhirribala harvesting turtle meat and learning about Miwul at Numburindi culture camp.

Left: Duwayne Nundhirribala at the billabong at Miwul with elders Rosanne Nundhirribala and Anne Marie Nundhirribala. Photo: Eve Pawlik

Left: Dhimurru Senior Ranger Fiona Yupunu Marika monitoring sea country. Photo: Dhimurru Aboriginal Corporation and Kenny Topmill

Above: Ranger Robin Dann sharing fire knowledge with volunteer fire team from Phuduhudu, adjacent to the Nga Pan National Park in the North West District of Botswana. Photo: Ari Gorring

Top: Otto Campbell and Baya Taylor leading Indigenous burning demonstration next to the Nga Pan National Park, Botswana. Photo: Ari Gorring
Kimberley Artist’s Statement

‘Art Centres are only for art, that’s what I’ve been told. But in Aboriginal way you can’t separate language, dance, song, country, story and traditional knowledge from art. Everything connects, art cannot stand alone, that’s the thing we really have to fight for’

Gabriel Nodea: Chairman Warmun Art Centre, Deputy Chairman ANKA, 10.10.12

We are sharing and teaching our art and culture for the younger generation, for the community, for Australia and for the rest of the world. Restoring and recording art and culture and teaching younger people about who they are and where they come from is important. It’s not just about painting and making money. We want government and funding bodies to understand and acknowledge that art and traditional culture must stand together.

Traditional knowledge has been passed down from generation to generation and if that stops it will be lost to the world. We want to use modern technology to keep and protect this knowledge.

Elders take the young people who grew up in the towns back to country to those special places, sharing the knowledge of their identity through their culture and reconnecting through multi-media. This is Aboriginal education and this is our school. This teaching is also important for non-Indigenous people when we share our history and stories with them.

That painting we do represents country, dancing and story. We also share this with non-Aboriginal people.

You don’t get strong art without strong culture. We would like the government and the funding bodies to understand that stronger and ongoing support, for all of this together, is needed now and into the future.

This statement was written collectively by Aboriginal artists and arts workers from Art Centres across the Kimberley who are members of the Arnhem, Northern and Kimberley Artists (ANKA) Aboriginal Corporation. The statement was composed and adopted at Waringarri Arts, Kununurra at the 2012 ANKA Kimberley Regional General Meeting, 10th October 2012, and re-affirmed at the ANKA Kimberley Regional General Meeting, Goolarri Aboriginal Media, Broome 18 September 2017.
1788 Colonisation at Port Jackson, N.S.W

A Chronology of Homelands and Art

Time Immemorial
Aboriginal peoples across northern Australia live and make art on their clan estates

1889 The legal doctrine of ‘terra nullius’ is first proclaimed as grounds for the Crown owning all Australian land from 1788

1888 Dawn of Art Exhibition
Drawings by Aboriginal prisoners at the Fannie Bay Gaol, Darwin, are exhibited at the Melbourne Centennial Exhibition. This the 1st western style exhibition of Aboriginal art

1963 Yirrkala Bark Petitions
First formal petition by Indigenous Australians recognised by the Australian Parliament. Sows the seeds for land rights

1967 Australian Referendum (Aboriginals)
Endorsed by over 90% of Australians

1963 Aboriginal Arts & Crafts Pty Ltd
Department of Aboriginal Affairs national marketing organisation

1970-1973 Assimilation Era
A 1973 conference of federal and state Aboriginal authorities in Canberra agrees to an assimilation policy. Formal definition takes place at 1961 Native Welfare Conference

1970-1973 Mission Times
Aboriginal groups relocate from their ancestral countries in northern Australia to missions and government reserves where people from different language and cultural groups live together

1972 Bilingual Education
Whitlam Labor Government announces the beginning of the NT bilingual education programs. Various NT and WA schools develop bilingual programs, which evolve into Both Way and Two Way curricula

1972-2005 Self-determination Era
In 1972 the Labour Party under Gough Whitlam introduces a policy of self-determination for Aboriginal people

1973 Homeland Support
Whitlam Labor Government provides homeland establishment grants supporting necessities such as water, shelter and basic communications facilities

1973 Homelands Movement
Northern Aboriginal peoples, on their own initiative, return to live on their homelands in increasing numbers

1978 Northern Territory Self-Government
Responsibilities for Aboriginal outstations/homelands remain with the Commonwealth Government

1978 Return to Country: The Aboriginal Homelands Movement in Australia
Australian Government House of Representatives inquiry report acknowledges revitalisation of artistic skills as a result of the homelands movement and the importance of art sales to homeland economies. The report views the future of homelands very positively

1980 Aboriginal Land Rights (NT) Act 1976
Is passed later leading to nearly 50% of the total NT land area reverting to Aboriginal ownership under free-hold title (historic bipartisan support)

1980 The Aboriginal Land Rights
Aboriginal cultural Foundation
Governed by Aboriginal tribal leaders from northern Australia. Supports ceremonial activity on homelands and tours dance groups nationally and internationally

1987 ANCAAA
The Association of Northern and Central Australian Aboriginal Artists (ANCAAA) is formed with 16 Art Centres. In 1992 the central region becomes separately incorporated as Descart

1990 ATSC National Homelands Policy

1990 Mabo and Others v. the State of Queensland
The High Court of Australia brings down its landmark decision which holds that Australia was not ‘terra nullius’ at the time of colonisation

1993 Native Title Act
Leads to determination of over 35% of Australia with more registered claims still to be considered

1997 Indigenous Protected Areas (IPA)
Program protecting national biodiversity

1997 Aboriginal Art and Crafts Industry Review
Laid the foundation for base funding for Art Centres through the NACIES program (1991) later renamed IVAIS. Today over 100 Art Centres nationally receive limited but crucial support

2000 Blue Mud Bay High Court Decision
Affirms Aboriginal ownership of the intertidal zone in the NT

2005 Cultural Museums Speech
Federal Minister for Indigenous Affairs, Amanda Vanstone suggests small homelands communities are ‘unviable’ & cultural museums

2005 Mainstreaming Era
The Howard Coalition Government closes ATSIC. The self-determination era is replaced by mainstreaming or normalisation

2008 Northern Territory of Australia v. Griffiths
Landmark native title compensation determination case in the High Court

2010 Strong Art Centres
48 Aboriginal owned and governed Art Centres and artist groups represent over 5000 artists in the ANKA regions of northern Australia. Many of these represented artists work on homelands keeping art, country and culture strong

2019 Northern Territory of Australia – Arts Backbone
Debate about threatened closure of 150 remote WA homelands by the Barnett Conservative Government after Federal Government stops funding of municipal services in remote Aboriginal communities. Prime Minister Tony Abbott calls homelands ‘lifestyle choices’ tax payers shouldn’t have to fund

2019 Contemporary Art
The National: New Australian Art survey exhibition (Sydney), includes over 30% Aboriginal art

2019 Arts and Crafts Industry Review
(Altman)
Laid the foundation for base funding for Art Centres through the NACIES program (1991) later renamed IVAIS. Today over 100 Art Centres nationally receive limited but crucial support

1970s -1980s Homelands Movement

1975-1981 Aboriginal art becomes contemporary art
The mainstream Australian art world is instantly challenged by the inclusion of bark paintings in the 3rd Sydney Biennale, 1979 and desert acrylics in Australia Perspectives, 1981. By the late 1980s Aboriginal art is accepted as contemporary fine art

1980s & exhibited internationally to c.40 countries

1979/1981 Aboriginal art is accepted as contemporary fine art

1970s Art production flourishes in northern homelands
Art is one of the only revenue streams for people living on homelands

1980s & exhibited internationally to c.40 countries

1987 Yothu Yindi Homeland Movement album

1990 ATSIC National Homelands Policy

1993 Homeland Support
Whitlam Labor Government provides homeland establishment grants supporting necessities such as water, shelter and basic communications facilities

1970s Homeland Support
Whitlam Labor Government provides homeland establishment grants supporting necessities such as water, shelter and basic communications facilities

1860s Ground ochre excavated at Mungalabeene rock shelter near Kakadu in 2017 reveals artists in northern Australia painted on their clan estates 65,000 years ago

This chronology is focused on the northern Australian regions supported by ANKA. It’s intended to promote thought on this important subject. It does not tell the full story which has many varying factors.
The Homelands and Art Mapping Project – Foundation Map was produced in 2018. It is part of ANKA’s ongoing advocacy for better understanding of the integral relationship between art and homelands in Northern Australia.

The map is the outcome of a small commissioned project undertaken in 2018 by anthropologist Roina Williams, who carried out desktop research. Working alongside a mapping specialist they used Digital Global Positioning Satellite data to produce: the hard-copy map (pp.22-23), accompanying list of 729 homelands and communities (front and back cover); and interactive google map imagery which is not being publicly shared.

Data for the map came from the Northern Territory Government Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics and the Western Australian Government Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage. ANKA requested the ‘GIS coordinates of outstations, homelands and blocks’ in its regions, resulting in the current list of Aboriginal communities which includes small homelands and outstations and some larger Aboriginal communities.

The map is in Minimum Viable Product (MVP) stage, meaning that it is a starting point for future consultation with Art Centres, traditional owners and artists to develop it further. The idea for the map originated in 2009 after ANKA’s Art and Homelands panel discussion at the Garma Festival of Traditional Culture. Then through consultations at ANKA regional meetings in 2010 and other occasions since it became clear that there was a very high level of interest by artists in sharing stories of art production on homelands.

Art Centres are vital and essential hubs for Northern Aboriginal art and culture, but it needs to be recognised that they are not always the sites of art production. Art Centres often represent and facilitate artists working on homelands.

A key objective of the map has always been to show that the country between the big Aboriginal settlements in Northern Australia is not empty, but is full of art and culture.

ANKA members want people to see that the homelands are at the heart of contemporary Aboriginal art of northern Australia.

The Homelands and Art Mapping Project – Foundation Map was produced in 2018.

Anindilyakwa Arts continues to diversify its arts program and increase engagement with community and artists across Groote Eylandt. Focusing on improved Indigenous employment for art workers and arts practitioners, the opening of new art spaces in Umbakumba and Angurugu encourage a program of revitalisation of traditional practices for women such as weaving pandanas, gathering fibres for string and baskets and carving and painting by men.

The program is fully supported by the Anindilyakwa Land Council within its Preserving Culture Department with its new mission to protect, maintain and promote Anindilyakwa culture.

A men’s Arts Development Officer commenced working at the new Angurugu Men’s Art Space engaging senior and younger men including artists from outstations at Thompsons Bay and the Milyakburra community on Bickerton Island. There has been a revitalisation of bark painting, carving and the making of Yiraka (didgeridoos). Activities involve the harvesting of raw materials, promoting the practice of being on country and revisiting traditional practices through which young and older men learn from one another.

At Umbakumba the new arts space is based in an old mud brick building of historical importance overlooking the sea. Open five days a week, the centre focuses on reengaging women in the community with traditional practices of bush string making, pandanus collection, preparation and weaving.

Many of the new artworks from both centres will be showcased for the first time at the Darwin Indigenous Art Fair in August.

The renowned Anindilyakwa bush dyed textile program and fashion line continues to gain momentum. In 2018 artists Annabel Amagula, Marice Lalara and Arts Development Officer Aly de Groot travelled to Indonesia to participate in a residency with Threads of Life. The three then travelled to Jakarta where designs from Anindilyakwa Arts featured on the catwalk at Jakarta Fashion week.

In 2019 funding has been secured through the University of Melbourne Asialink grants for artists to travel back to Jakarta for a second residency. Collaboration with rangers on the Ghost Net Program also continues where abandoned ghost nets are collected from the sea in the Anindilyakwa Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) and then used for weaving baskets and jewellery combined with bush dyed fabric.

The gallery in Alyangula operates daily as a commercial space with curated exhibitions of works for locals and tourists that visit Groote Eylandt.

Above Left: Tammy Lalara with ghost net and bush dyed fabric basket.
Above: Edith Mamarika collecting bush peach
Above above: Anindilyakwa Arts.

p.26 Top Left: Artist viewing ANKA Homeland and Art display at Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair 2018
p.26 Top Middle: Roina Williams at the ANKA Homelands and Art booth at Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair 2018
p.26 Top Right: Umbakumba Art Space
p.26 Bottom Right: Umbakumba Art Space activities. All photos: ANKA.
The National 2019: New Australian Art

Desert River Sea Portraits of the Kimberley


The National 2019 features artists from all states and territories. Over one third of the 70 artists are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders.

Two major works are included from the ANKA regions in Northern Australia. A magnificent installation of paintings on perspex by Mangkaja Arts artists Daisy Japulija, Sonia Kurarra, Mrs Rawlins and Mrs Uhl, Martuwarra (2018) and Ishmael Marika (Buku Larrnggay Mulka) and Curtis Taylor’s joint multi-media installation, with painted larrakiti and animation and video.

The senior Mangkaja Arts artists are all residents of Guwardi Ngadu aged residential care facility, Fitzroy Crossing, WA.

Exhibition: 29 March – June 2019


Artists

Desert River Sea: Portraits of the Kimberley at the Art Gallery of Western Australia (9 February – 27 May 2019) celebrates the outstanding inter-generational achievement of recent Kimberley art.

This landmark exhibition concludes a major six-year project, Desert River Sea: Kimberley Art Then & Now. Supported by Rio Tinto, the multi-year initiative sought to bring the Art Gallery of Western Australia (Perth) and artists of The Kimberley closer together: linking ‘the museum’ and living artists.

The exhibition spans generations of living artists including many senior figures, notably Mr Ngamatala Tommy May (Mangkaja Arts, former ANKA Chair).

Over the six-years the Desert River Sea project also documented a wide range of cultural practices and developed an indepth web portal desertriversea.com.au

AGWA is commended for so effectively opening the doors to living art from the Kimberley and strengthening bonds with artistic and cultural heritage.

Top Left: Ngamatala Tommy May in Fitzroy Crossing with his Desert River Sea commissioned work Untitled 2018. Synthetic polymer and paint on cow hide, 122.0 x 158.5 cm. State Art Collection, Art Gallery of Western Australia. Courtesy Mangkaja Arts Resource Agency. Photo: Emilia Galatis. Top: Mervyn Street with his Desert River Sea commissioned work Drawing cattle in the summer time 2018 (installation view, AGWA 2019). Shaved and etched cow hide, 195.5 x 217.5 cm. State Art Collection, Art Gallery of Western Australia. Courtesy Mangkaja Arts Resource Agency. Photo: Rebecca Mannell. Left (3R) Markia Riley (Warmun Art Centre), Carly Lane and Emilia Galatis (AGWA); Dora Griffis (Waringarri). Photo: ANKA

About ANKA

ANKA has launched a new campaign for the next stage of its highly successful Arts Worker Extension Program (AWEIP) which will see the program deliver another 50 graduates over the next five years.

What is the Arts Worker Extension Program (AWEIP)?

ANKA’s Arts Worker Extension Program (AWEIP) has established itself as the leading professional development and career pathways program for Aboriginal arts workers from remote communities across Northern Australia.

The program addresses key training and development needs in remote community Art Centres, strengthening Indigenous workforce participation across the Top End, and building Indigenous arts leadership nationally.

By providing tailored professional development and targeted training, and opening up career pathways for Aboriginal arts workers, the program strengthens the cultural and artistic vibrancy, and operation and governance of Indigenous arts and cultural enterprises:
• The ambitious first stage of AWEIP, developed and delivered by ANKA over six years (from 2011 to 2016), had outstanding results. 50 Aboriginal arts workers from 24 remote community Art Centres participated in and graduated from the program.
• ANKA entered long term partnerships with leading cultural and education institutions across Australia such as the National Gallery of Australia and the University of Melbourne.
• Vital funding for AWEIP Stage One came from substantial investment by successive governments (state, territory and federal), major philanthropic organisations and corporate entities.

The Next Step For Us

In 2017, as AWEIP Stage One drew to a close, ANKA continued to consult with its membership, program participants, partners and funders, to identify the ongoing needs for arts worker professional development.

Overwhelmingly, the message from all stakeholders was that AWEIP should continue, and that ANKA is best-placed to continue to build on and deliver the program.

1. Evangeline Comeroto (Djirring Arts, NT) and Tina Blum, Curator at the NGA (AWEIP 2013)
2. Participants at Parliament House (AWEIP 2016)
3. Dj Marika (Buku Larrnggay Mulka, NT) and ANKA Chair Djamalawal Manwili AM welcoming participants to the program (AWEIP 2014)
4. Conservator Sandra You with Edward Yangapnja (Manngi Arts, NT) and Marcus Passac (Manngi Arts & Culture, NT) at MAGNT (AWEIP 2013)
5. Rhoda Hammer (Waralungku Arts, NT) and Rashael Morris (Kunungkarni Arts, NT) during iPad training (AWEIP 2014)
6. Chris Durie (ANKA) with Janice Murray (Jilamara Arts, NT) site visit (AWEIP 2011)

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ANKA PROJECTS – ARTS BACKBONE
We Have A Plan

In 2018, ANKA undertook planning for the second stage of the Arts Worker Extension Program (AWEP) and produced the AWEP Stage Two Strategic Plan (2019-2024) which sets out the ongoing development and delivery of professional development and career pathway activities.

Stage Two is made up of two programs:

• The Foundation Program - a one year program of workshops, training, networking, field trips, site visits and interstate internships for arts workers to learn new skills, advance their careers and increase their participation in the wider arts industry
• The Pathways Program - an ongoing career development and support service connecting graduates of the Foundation Program with ongoing professional development opportunities, including higher education options

ANKA has very clear targets for the second stage of AWEP. The program will:

• Run for another five years (2020-2024)
• Produce another 50 arts workers (so there will be a total of 100 AWEP Graduates by 2024); and
• Open up even more pathways to higher education and accredited training for existing and future AWEP Graduates alongside other professional development opportunities

We Need Partners

The program will need partners to build on its success, so ANKA is currently campaigning for support to deliver AWEP Stage Two. This means finding individuals, corporations and organisations who can help ensure the program continues to develop and the growing network of Indigenous arts workers and leaders across Northern Australia reach their full potential.

Together with its program partners, ANKA is confident the programs proven success will be recognised and attract funding partners who share a commitment to addressing vital employment and leadership priorities in the Indigenous arts industry.

With encouragement from stakeholders, a range of partnership opportunities have been made available for individuals, government and corporate entities to support the program in a variety of ways.

For more information about ANKA, AWEP and partnership opportunities email ceo@anka.org.au

You can follow the program on www.facebook.com/ankaartists and www.instagram.com/ankaaboriginalartists

1. AWEP participants with Franchesca Cabrillo, Senior Curator at the NGA (AWEP 2016)
2. Evangeline Cameron (Djilpin Arts, NT), Vivian Warlapinni (Twi Design, NT), Barayuwa Mununggurr (Buku-Larrnggay Mulka, NT), Marcus Pascoe (Milingimbi Art & Culture, NT) and Edward Yalupsunga (Mungwi Arts, NT) at the Grimwade Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation, University of Melbourne (AWEP 2013)
3. Vivian Warlapinni (Twi Design, NT) mentoring Jangu Nundhirribala (Numbulwar Numburindi Artists, NT) during iPad training (AWEP 2016)
4. AWEP Graduate Conference cultural tourism field trip (AWEP Grad Program 2016)
5. Dylan Miller (Karungkarni Arts, NT) with mentor Marcus Pascoe (Milingimbi Art & Culture, NT) (AWEP 2015)

Promotional Short Film

To help spread the word about the next stage the Arts Worker Extension Program (AWEP), ANKA has produced an inspiring short film showcasing the program graduates, their achievements and their ongoing aspirations.

The film, titled ‘We Have A Plan’, features nine Aboriginal arts workers from remote community Art Centres across Northern Australia, who graduated from Stage One of AWEP, sharing personal stories of how the program has opened up career pathways and access to higher education.

Produced for ANKA by Multi Story Media, and shot on location at the University of Melbourne in late 2018, the film also features ANKA Chair, Djambawa Marawili AM, and staff from the University’s Grimwade Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation.

The full length version of the four minute film can be viewed here: https://vimeo.com/323075405

Film stills: From ‘We Have A Plan’, Multi Story Media / ANKA
Nine Aboriginal arts workers from remote community Art Centres across the Top End completed a new tailored higher education program at the University of Melbourne earlier this year.

The Specialist Certificate in Cross Cultural Conservation and Heritage is part of Stage Two of ANKA’s Arts Worker Extension Program (AWEP). The product of a unique partnership between ANKA, the Grimwade Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation and Trinity College, it is the first accredited university program designed for Indigenous arts workers from remote communities to be offered in Australia.

The arts workers, who are graduates of the first stage of AWEP, travelled from Arnhem Land, the Tiwi Islands, the Kimberley and the Darwin/Katherine regions to participate in a pilot of the course. They spent two weeks living and studying oncampus at the university, where they worked on skills for the management and care of important cultural collections.

During the course the arts workers participated in advanced hands-on conservation assessment and treatment workshops in the Grimwade Centre laboratories, and tutorials on the development and management of community collections.

The arts workers also did some of the teaching — including sharing their traditional knowledge about harvesting natural materials for use in the production of artwork with staff and students at the University of Melbourne.

The graduates of the specialist certificate have gained a professional qualification, developed further expertise in the field of conservation, experienced higher education in a tailored, supportive environment and developed their leadership skills. Their communities will also benefit from the sharing of this advanced knowledge.

The piloting of the Specialist Certificate in Cross Cultural Conservation and Heritage in late 2018 and early 2019 was made possible with funding and in-kind support from the NT Department of Business, INPEX Ichthys Project, the University of Melbourne and Trinity College.

ANKA embarked on the next stage of its Arts Worker Extension Program (AWEP) in May this year, the new Foundation Program, which replaces the former ‘Undergraduate Program’.

The AWEP Foundation Program is an intensive professional development program for Aboriginal arts workers from Top End Art Centres to learn new skills, advance their professional careers and increase their participation in the wider arts industry.

The program has been designed to equip participants with the tools, knowledge, networks and confidence to undertake higher education, skills extension and leadership roles in the future.

As well as completing a two-week interstate internship, arts workers participate in group training, individual support sessions, professional development activities at major cultural and educational institutions in Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne.

In June, participants completed two-weeks of internships and professional development activities at major cultural and educational institutions in Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne.

Building on ANKA’s innovative action research into use of Assistive Technologies for arts workers who do not have English as a first language (sponsored by INPEX in 2017) the Foundation Program equips participants with electronic tools to extend reading and writing in English.

1. Vivian Warlapinni (Tiwi Design, NT) and Augustine Kennedy (Djalpur Arts, NT) with Professor Rohan Staggart (Grimwade Centre) and Gabriel Nodea (Warrum Arts, WA)
2. Specialist Certificate participants arriving at Trinity College, University of Melbourne
3. Ruth Nalmakarra (Milingimbi Art & Culture, NT) and Dora Griffiths (Waringari Arts, WA)
4. Specialist Certificate participants with ANKA Chair Djambawa Marawili AM
5. Lynley Fargnoldah (Mangkaja Arts, WA), Rhoda Hammer (Waringari Arts, NT) and Ruth Nalmakarra (Milingimbi Art & Culture, NT) at University of Melbourne
6. Augustine Kennedy (Djalpur Arts, NT) and ANKA Chair Djambawa Marawili AM

1. 2019 AWEP participants during tour of Parliament House
2. Colin Fumantamari (Kjarra Arts, NT) presenting to guests at the AGNSW
3. Leon Dharmamandji (Milingimbi Art & Culture, NT) with Milingimbi objects in the storage areas of the Macleay museum
4. Angelina Boona (Kiri Kira Arts, WA) at AIATSIS
5. Bitharr Maymuru (Buku-Larrnggay Mulka, NT) and Kira McDonald (Mimi Arts, NT) during professional development sessions in Darwin
Arts Worker Extension Program – Achievements and Aspirations

Four graduates from ANKA’s Arts Worker Extension Program (AWEP) share some thoughts on their achievements so far, and their aspirations for the future of AWEP.

**A GATE OPEN TO UNIVERSITY**

‘The thing I wanted to achieve through AWEP, to try and make a gate open for others, is to do university, to get that little piece of paper. It makes me feel happy, proud, and makes me really good inside. I’ve been feeling this for a long time now.’

Vivian Watsapinni
Senior Arts Worker, Tiwi Designs

**SKILLED UP AND ACKNOWLEDGED**

‘[AWEP] got me really skilled up and also acknowledged. I would love to get the younger generation to step in and do AWEP as well.’

Michelle Woody
Senior Arts Worker, Jilamara Arts

**PRESERVING STORY, LANGUAGE AND CULTURE**

‘I love studying conservation, and the fact that you can renew something that’s old. It’s not just any old painting, that painting has a lot of story behind it. Once you preserve that painting you are preserving its story, its language, the culture behind it.’

Lynley Nargoodah
Senior Arts Worker, Mangkaja Arts

**KEEP ON LEARNING**

‘I’ve still got a lot to learn and I’d like to keep on learning. AWEP keeps opening up new learning opportunities for us.’

Gabriel Nodea
Senior Arts Worker, Warmun Art Centre

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ANKA Regional General Meetings 2018

Regional General Meetings allow members and Art Centre staff from remote locations to meet face-to-face, providing important opportunities for mutual exchange and learning.

Meetings enable strong Aboriginal members’ led discourse, expand members’ networks, and share knowledge and resources to promote sustainability. They allow ANKA to consult directly with its membership.

In 2018 meetings included discussion of: regional priorities, the homelands and art mapping project, cultural legacy and cultural tourism. Identified priorities included: youth engagement and leadership, and continued support for the ANKA board’s vision for a Darwin based headquarters and Aboriginal Art and Culture Resource and Information Centre. Elections were held for the 2019 – 2020 ANKA Board of Directors.

The **Tiwi Regional General Meeting 2018** was held at TITEB Training Centre, Warmunyangga, on September 12. The meeting was chaired by ANKA Director, Jedda Puruntatameri and Michelle Woody, with a welcome by outgoing director, Brian Farmer, who was honoured for ten years board service. Participants from: Jilamara Arts, Munupi Arts and Tiwi Designs.

The **Darwin/Katherine Regional General Meeting 2018** was held at Ngukurr Art Centre on 18-19 September. The meeting was chaired by ANKA Director Jangy Nundhkinboloo and welcomed by Walter Kolbong Rogers Chairperson of Ngukurr Arts. Participants from: Kungkarni Arts & Culture, Maningrida Arts & Culture, Mandalba Arts & Culture and Milnguni Arts & Culture.

The **Darwin/Katherine Regional General Meeting 2018** was held at Warmun Art Centre on October 24. The meeting was chaired by ANKA directors Dora Griffiths and Gabriel Nodea. Participants from: Kira Kiro Arts, Marawili Arts, Mangkaja Arts, Waringarri Aboriginal Arts, Warlayirti Artists and Warmun Art Centre.

The **Arnhem Regional General Meeting 2018** was held at Buku-Larrnggay Mulka, Yirrkala, on October 9 – 10. The meeting was led by ANKA Chairman Djambawa Marawili AM and opened with a ceremony from the Art Centre. Participants from: Anindilyakwa Arts, Balbarra Arts, Buku-Larrnggay Mulka, Bulu Bulu Arts, Echu Island Arts, Gapuwiyak Culture & Arts, Injalak Arts, Maringka Arts & Culture, Maruku Arts & Culture and Milnguni Arts & Culture.

The **Kimberley Regional General Meeting 2018** was held at Warmun Art Centre on October 24. The meeting was chaired by ANKA directors Dora Griffiths and Gabriel Nodea. Participants from: Kira Kiro Arts, Marawili Arts, Mangkaja Arts, Waringarri Aboriginal Arts, Warlayirti Artists and Warmun Art Centre.
The 2018 ANKA AGM and the Conference ‘Art, Land, Culture: The Foundations’ took place at Warmun Art Centre in the East Kimberley, in collaboration with the Kawalawalanj Warmun Art 20th Anniversary celebrations, from October 25 – 27.

Day 1 commenced with the ANKA AGM, followed by the Annual Conference. Conference sessions had three themes: Learning From Each Other; Learning from the Land; and Learning from the Elders. It also included presentations from ORIC on changes to the CATSI Act; an update from the Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair; and inter-regional weaving skills sharing.

Day 2 continued exploration of conference themes; as well as New Directions in Indigenous Textiles; ochre exchanges; conservation demonstrations; and tours of the Art Centre and Warmun Community Collection led by Warmun Art Centre Chair, Gabriel Nadler (ANKA Deputy Chair) and senior arts workers. Warmun Art Centre elders and children presented a gala fashion parade.

A celebratory dinner & the Kawalawalanj Warmun Art 20th Anniversary Joonba concluded the events.

1. Gabriel Nadler conducting Gija Dreaming tour
2. Kawalawalanj Warmun Art 20th Anniversary Joonba – Gija Giri ceremony. Artistic Director Rusty Peters, Manager Gabriel Nadler
3. AGM Smoking - ANKA Director John Tipungwuti (Tiwi Design) & Barry Hayes (Jilamara Art)
4. Hannah Roe & Sid Michaels, ORIC
5. Smoking ceremony
6. International weaving lead by Lily Roy (ANKA Special Advisor, Milingimbi Art & Culture)
7. Dora Griffiths (ANKA Director, Waringarri Arts) chairs ANKA Annual Conference
8. Maryan Street and Huwase Claire (Wanggaar Art), ANKA AGM
9. Weaving workshop
10. Djipin Arts’ Kate George & Anna Lewis (ANKA Standin Director)
11. Conference lunch, Warrnyi
12. ANKA members from Tiwi, Arnhem Land & Katherine/Darwin before Joonba
13. Trust members - Michelle Woody and Nina Puruntatameri
14. Raymond Bulambula (Arnhem Land) smoking ceremony
15. Matt Poll (Macleay Museum) smoking ceremony
16. Gabriel Nadler showing country in his artwork
17. Warmun Aged Care Facility
18. Breakfast gathering
19. ANKA Directors leading ANKA AGM
20. Sophie Lewincamp, Jangu Nundhirribala (Numburindi Artists) & Sadie Carrington (Warmun Art Centre)
21. Shirlie Purdie (Warmun Art Centre)
22. Bus driver the bus driver
23. New directions in Indigenous fashion - lead by Belinda Cook
24. Gija fashion parade. Model Patrick Mung Mung (Warmun Art Centre)
25. Learning from the Country - Shirlie Purdie & Frances Nolan in conversation
26. Learning from the Elders - Matt Poll (Macleay Museum) & Ralph Nolan discuss museums & communities
27. Gordon Barney & Rusty Peters (Warmun Art Centre)
28. Warmun - Darwin bus trip
29. ANKA Directors meeting, Warmun Council Board Room
The following 21 projects were completed or commenced between July 2018 and June 2019, directly benefiting 20 Art Centres and 1,562 workers.

- Banjilya Homelands Studio (Yilparr, NT): Yilingungupu sand sculpture commemorating the 10th anniversary of the Australian High Court's Blue Mud Bay decision.
- Buku-Larrnggay (Yirrkala, NT): Photoshop training for Art Centre staff and arts workers.
- Bula/Bula Arts (Ramingining, NT): Strategic business planning workshop.
- Duurmu Arts (Peppimenarti, NT): Peppimenarti cultural tourism camp reinvigoration and infrastructure development.
- Injalak Arts (Gunbalanya, NT): Development and printing of Injalak Rock Art Tours promotional leaflets.
- Jilamara Arts (Wilkigarri, NT): Jilamara Arts website development (see page 37).
- Mangkaja Arts (Pirinyarai, WA): Jewellery extension program with Jess Jubb.
- Maringrida Arts and Culture (Maringrida, NT): Freight packing and artwork handling workshop.
- Merrepen Arts (Daly River, NT): Cultural tourism and professional development workshops with artists from Palparn Wumangat Art Centre Port Keats (Wheddoni).
- Milingimi Arts (Milingimbi, NT): MECA collection conservation with Charles Darwin University (see page 37).
- Mimi Arts (Katherine, NT): Weaving workshops to further cultural tourism skills.
- Mowanjum Arts (Derby, WA): Cultural tourism exchange visit to Gumbanbari National Park.
- Murupu Arts (Ptrangkympi, NT): National NAIDOC activities and professional development at Circular Quay.
- Ngukurr Arts (Ngukurr, NT): Community cultural keeping place development with Uluru Tai.
- Waringarri Arts (Kununurra, WA): Cultural tourism development with WATOC, Pudaluk Cultural Tours, Litchfield Tours and Tiwi Designs (see page 37).

For left: Art Centre trip to permission Babbarra Design. Deborah Wurkidj design applied with vinyl wrap stickers. 2018. Photo: Babbarra Design

Left: Deborah Wurkidj painting on the etching plate withbitumen, Babbarra Design etching and printmaking workshop, 2019. Photo: Babbarra Design

Above: Amy Nicholas showing Michelle Woody, Colleen Freddy and Michelle Bush how to upload information and images onto the new Jilamara website. Photo: Jackie Hocking.

Top: Nicholas Goldthorpe filming Jilamara artists dancing on the beach at Karrakale. Photo: Jilamara Arts.

Right: L-R: Leon Dhamarrandji, Carolyn McClements, Jacob Djapangji perform conservation work on the MECA collection. Photo: Courtesy of MAGNT/Merinda Campbell.

Top Right: Kellie Joswig and Priscilla Gapsinawray handling an item from the MECA collection. Photo: Courtesy of MAGNT / Merinda Campbell.

Last July, Jilamara Arts developed and launched a new Art Centre website. Their new website enables art workers and staff to trade online and share Tiwi culture with new audiences.

During the project, artists and art workers were fully engaged in the development process; converting web copy, artist profiles and language translations with facilitator Amy Nicolas. Arts workers and Jilamara staff were trained to sell artwork online using Stories Art Money (SAM) and manage the website.

Trainee tour guides from Waringarri Aboriginal Arts were provided with practical training in cultural tourism. Guided by team leader, Ted Corrigan, and a mentor from the Western Australian Indigenous Tourism Operators Council (WAITOC) the trainees participated in professional Indigenous led tours of Darwin, Litchfield and the Tiwi Islands.

This first-hand experience has improved tour guides understanding of best practice, and built their confidence and skills. The Tiwi Islands tour included a visit to Tiwi Designs where textile artists in the group looked at the setup. This has inspired the artists to continue to develop their projects at Waringarri Aboriginal Arts.

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**New Federal Minister for Indigenous Australians**

ANKA welcomes incoming Art Centre coordinators and managers:
- Late Whites, Anindilyakwa Arts & Cultural Centre
- Sam Moody, Elcho Island Arts
- Hayley Broek, Injalak Arts (Yarilir Arts)
- Hannah Raison & Will Heathcote, Jilamara Arts and Crafts
- Erika Halls, Larrakia Gallery
- Natalie McCarthy, Mangkaja Arts (Studio Coordinator)
- Bernie Ye, Ngurlu Jundu Designs
- Brooke Airrows, Numbulwar Art & Cultural Centre (Program Manager)
- Isabella Walsh, Palngun Wurnangat
- Karina Langdon, Walilangu Arts
- Dominic Keanagh, Warmun Art Centre (Gallery Coordinator)

ANKA acknowledges the hard work and dedication of Art Centre managers and coordinators who departed from July 2018:
- Late Whites, Elcho Island Arts, Galubikirra
- Felicity Wright, Injalak Arts, Gunbalanya
- Jackie Hooking, Jilamara Arts and Crafts, Wilkukira
- Melissa Ryder, Ngurrnojina Designs, Browme
- Casey Purwarrick, Palngun Wurnangat, Wadeye

**Numbulwar Numburindi Artists**

After a long wait, the community of Numbulwar has opened the doors to their new Art Centre. Everybody is so happy; it’s a long time we have been waiting.

The Art Centre has a booth at the Darwin Art Fair and the official opening is at the Numbulwar Festival in September.

**Art Centre Staff Departures and Arrivals**

ANKA acknowledges the historic appointment of Kenneth George Wyatt AM as the first Indigenous Minister for Indigenous Australians in the Federal Government (May 2019). Ken Wyatt was also the first Indigenous Australian elected to the House of Representatives (2010), the first to serve as a government minister (2011), and the first appointed to cabinet.

Rose Lalara at the Australian Indigenous leadership conference in Melbourne (2019).

Orice Rogers at the Australian Indigenous leadership conference in Melbourne (2019).

**Parliament House Canberra - Portrait of Minister Wyatt AM, visited by art workers Hazel Clarke and Leon Dhamarrandji.**

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Ngarrirri gola beneninha menkawiya jimerrawoon ganggoyi

May you rest well forever ganggoyi. *

Ms P. Thomas [Nagarra], whose bush name was Boolojangali, meaning ‘big rain coming down with lots of wind,’ was a remarkable Gija artist and woman. Her commitment to preservation, teaching and artist and woman. Her commitment of wind,’ was a remarkable Gija ‘big rain coming down with lots

Born in Riya on the Turner River, southeast of Purnululu, P.T maintained a strong connection to country and often visited its dreaming places within her art practice. She had her childhood, and then worked as an indentured labourer, on Turner station. In her own words, she never went to school but when she grew up, she learned how to walk straight away. Getting up early before sunrise, collecting water from the well, milking nanny goats and cows, making roads without the help of machines, cleaning up the house often on her knees and never having any breaks, remained raw memories of her youth, which added to her ‘buggered up’ health. Nevertheless, she loved walking the land with her grandmother and the old women; hunting, collecting dingo scalps and looking for gold. She was a very warm and genuine person, who cared for all people and beings, and maintained a healthy sense of humour throughout her life.

She married Joe Thomas from Riya (Crocodile Hole) and lived there for many years, joining the Jirrawun Arts movement, and later becoming Vice Chairperson. Her paintings, depicting dreaming places and bush Tucker from Crocodile Hole and country around the middle Ord and Turner River areas where she was born, achieved almost immediate success. In 1999 her stunning work Boombem Goonlem, Hot Water Spring II in her signature black and pink/red ochre was hung to preservation, teaching and artist and woman. Her commitment of wind,’ was a remarkable Gija ‘big rain coming down with lots

The Escape was highly commended in the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards in 2000. She was also a singer and dancer with the Neminuwinarl Performance Group performing in Fire, Fire Burning Bright in international arts festivals in Perth and Melbourne in 2002. She sang the haunting Warnalirri with Peggy Patrick on the the group’s 2002 CD. P.T later became a prominent Jooomba singer with the Gija performers of Warmun, and her last performances included the Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre (KALACC) Festival in Lombok and the ANKA AGM in Darwin in 2017.

Warmun Art Centre thanks Frances Koford for her knowledge and input.

Above: P.T in 2017 at Tarrangirti, Art Gallery of South Australia in front of her artwork Gemenye, 2006, natural ochre and pigments on board. Photo: Warmun Art Centre

* Frances Koford, Letter read at P.T's funeral.

The ANKA Board of Directors 2019 -2020
Celebrating Indigenous Governance

Stand-in Directors

Anna Lewis

Johnny Warntuwarl Malibirr

Maxine Drynan

Arts Backbone

Vol. 18: Issue 2 & Vol. 19: Issue 1, August 2019

Special Advisors to the Board

Vale PT
By Warmun Art Centre

Photo: Warmun Art Centre

2010), and became a cultural leader and director there.

P.T’s work has been acquired for a number of collections, including a special focus purchase of five paintings by the Western Australian Art Gallery in 2000. Her painting The Escape was highly commended in the 17th Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards in 2000.

When Jirrawun Arts folded, she joined the Warmun Art Movement [circa 2010], and became a cultural leader and director there.

Above: P.T in 2017 at Tarrangirti, Art Gallery of South Australia in front of her artwork Gemenye, 2006, natural ochre and pigments on board. Photo: Warmun Art Centre

* Frances Koford, Letter read at P.T’s funeral.