

# ANKAAA

Association of Northern, Kimberley  
and Arnhem Aboriginal Artists

# ARTS BACKBONE

Volume 5 Issue 2: June 2005



*Gulumbu Yunupingu*

GAN'YU (detail) ochre pigments on stringybark, 2005

© Buku-Larrnggay Mulka & the artist

INSIDE ◦ Yananymul Mununggurr ◦ Milingimbi Art & Craft Centre Re-Opens ◦ Glenys Newry from Waringarri Arts ◦ Musée du quai Branly 2006 ◦ "Yakumirri" ◦ Bula'bula Arts Archive ◦ Warlayirti Artists' Glass Workshop ◦ OZeCulture Conference ◦ Who's Who & What's New ◦ Events & Exhibitions Calendar

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Today ANKAAA is formally standing solid with six staff and 12 Yolngu (Indigenous) Executive. This Yolngu and Balanda are working together and sharing together, this is the way it should be to make ANKAAA and all its members and the Indigenous art industry strong, to keep moving forward. This way we are both learning and sharing Yolngu and Balanda ways and showing government and non

government that working together makes the job easier.

We are spending the funding (VACS funding from Arts NT and DCITA through Australia Council) wisely on training and support for artists in their Art Centres where the arts and skills are needed. This training is helping their Art centres get stronger.

## Message from the ANKAAA Manager

Stephanie Hawkins

Welcome to the 2nd issue of the Arts Backbone for 2005. We have and a new look newsletter and hope you like it! Issue 1 introduced ANKAAA's new staff structure with the addition of two Regional Industry Development Officers in Katherine and Kununurra and a new Darwin based Industry Development Officer. We have been developing some exciting projects which will be coming to fruition in the next quarter including an International Export Strategy with the assistance of NT DBIRD, Arts NT, Austrade and DESART which will result in a export focused trip by dealers and galleries from Germany. We are currently finalising a two year Business Development Project for Art

Centres including the recruitment of a Business Development Officer with the assistance of DEWR. Also in the final negotiation stage is the Tripartite agreement between ANKAAA, Arts NT and the Australia Council for three year Visual Arts and Crafts Strategy funding and the NT Indigenous Building Strong Arts Business funding. Art Centres across the ANKAAA regions have been participating in workshops, exhibitions and increasing sales through the their online galleries and are preparing for a busy dry season with a schedule of events including the NATSIAA awards, GARMA and the KALACC Festival all in August 2005.

## Glenys Newry

Art Gallery Assistant, Waringarri Arts



I have been working at Waringarri Arts since Easter 2005, but I used to work here about 3 years ago also. I look after the gallery and make sure it is always tidy and the paintings are well displayed. I also do a lot of customer service such as selling work and explaining the art to tourists. I also take people on tours of the gallery to educate people about the art and culture at Waringarri.

Although I don't paint myself, I enjoy listening to the old people and the stories they tell about the paintings. I am Mirrawoong, but my father is Ngariman. Most of the artists at Waringarri are Mirrawoong and they paint this country.

# Milingimbi Art & Craft Centre Re-Opens

Story by Rachelle Burke, Manager



Milingimbi Art & Craft Centre is experiencing very exciting times. With the re-activation of the art centre after over 2 years of non-operation.

The Art Centre re-opened on the 7th of March 2005. Looking back on that first day, it's incredible to see where we are now after such a short period of time. Accounts have been opened, artist materials in shop, staff on board, paintings, woven pandanus works, artefacts, carvings, yidaki and necklaces are all on display in the open plan gallery, which exists within a charming mud brick building situated right on the beach!

The Milingimbi Art & Craft Centre now has a full staff. *Joey Djakala Trainee Manager, Alfred Walpay Field Officer, Jonathan Roy Packer and Bush Trip Coordinator Paul Wurrutjpu Packer & Gallery*

*Assistant & Elvira Manybunu Admin Assistant.*

I have spent a lot of time with the new staff talking, listening, and watching. We were all exploring what position would be suitable. After one month the staff members have narrowed it down as to which area they feel they are best suited to. All staff members have put in a tremendous effort and are very excited to have an outlet for their artwork and to be represented in a professional manner.

We are planning workshops for staff and artists, the first of which will be printmaking.

After many conversations with staff and artists we have planned our first exhibition to open April 2006 in Melbourne.

I would like to take this opportunity to mention a couple of emerging

artists *Enrika Marmar, 15 and Jacinta Burukumalawuy aged 17.* These are two sisters who are producing some wonderful art works on paper. Their style is bright and has a youthfulness about it. I feel strongly that these are two young women to keep an eye on. Also three young men by the names of *Paul Wurrutjpu, Jonathan Roy and David Roy.* These young men are producing high quality works on paper, canvas and bark.

Many people have commented that since the opening of the MACC something wonderful has happened, it's brought a real buzz into the community.

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## Yananyumul Mununggurr

Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Art Centre

Winner of Best Bark at the 1995 National Telstra Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Awards. Her father Mutitjpu Mununggurr was the overall first prize winner in 1990. Her second mother Gulumbu Yunupingu won first prize in 2004. Yananyumul is one of Yirrkala's most popular print artists. She has nine children with husband Yalpi Yunupingu who exhibited in last year's Sculpture by the Sea.

Her work is in museums in Queensland, Victoria, Western Australia and the Northern Territory.

Yananyumul's work will feature in 'Yakumirri' opening at Raft Artspace, Darwin 15th July.

© Buku-Larrnggay Mulka



This landmark commission is being curated by Brenda L. Croft (Senior Curator, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art, National Gallery of Australia) and Hetti Perkins (Curator, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts, Art Gallery of New South Wales) & will be a permanent, site-specific public artwork exhibiting eight major Indigenous Australian artists. The artists are Lena Nyadbi (WA), Paddy Nyunkuny Bedford (WA), Judy Watson (Qld), Gulumbu Yunupingu (NT), John Mawurndjul (NT), Tommy Watson (WA), Ningura Napurrula (NT) and Michael Riley (NSW).

The works will be part of the architectural fabric of the building. The artists' work will combine original work and high quality reproductions of original work for the ground, first, second, third and fourth floor ceilings and façade of the rue de l'Université Building, one of the museum's four buildings. The museum is dedicated to the art and civilisations of Africa, Asia, Oceania and the Americas. Its collection includes more than 3,500 artefacts and masterpieces from the Musée de l'Homme (Museum of Mankind) and the former Musée des Arts d'Afrique et d'Océanie (African and Oceanic Art Museum).

'It's extremely significant that Indigenous work from Australia was selected by the museum to realise the highly artistic vision of internationally renowned architect Jean Nouvel for this landmark building. From a curatorial perspective it's extremely satisfying being part of such a large-scale, highly collaborative venture drawing on traditional and contemporary urban practice,' said Ms Perkins.

**Australia Council for the Arts**



Left to right: Brenda Croft, Hetti Perkins, Gulumbu Yunupingu

**Gulumbu Yunupingu** is elder sister to Galarrwuy and Mandawuy, healer and sage of North East Arnhem, translator of the Bible into Gumatj over 26 years, winner of the 2004 Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award. The design on the three memorial poles which won that prize was based on stories of the stars from her father Munggurrawuy (1905-79). When she looks at the stars, Gulumbu thinks about the universe, all around, and about every tribe, every colour.

In every corner of the world people can look up and see the stars. This is Gulumbu's vision. In her art, she focuses on the link between all people everywhere. Gulumbu stressed that **"We look UP to the stars, trees grow UP, people sit or stand UP, the poles stand UP. What do we grow up to? (looking up)...the stars!"**

The life force (growth) inevitably matures into eternity (death) as a natural stage of growth. She also says that the larger stars she represents are those visible to our naked eye but the dots are those that we cannot see which are there as well. This is what a being with an infinite view would see in the night sky nothing but stars.

When Hettie and Brenda came to Yirrkala they went bush with Gulumbu and found a nest of three baby Red Wing Parrots right at the base of a hollowed trunk that she chopped down. They are still alive and doing well.

*Will Stubbs, Manager, Buku-Larrnggay Mulka*

ANKAAA Members Feature in the Largest International Co  
**Musée du quai Branly - opening on the**

Lena Nyadbi - Warmun Art Centre

Paddy Nyunkuny Bedford - Jirrawun Arts

Gulu

**John Mawurndjul** and Maningrida Arts & Culture staff have been closely working with the Australia Council, curators Hetti Perkins and Brenda Croft and the reproduction team on the project.

After choosing an image from an existing painting for the ceiling, Mawurndjul has decided to create on site, in Paris, a design for a huge column that he will paint with the help of the reproduction team comprising four mural artists.

The team came to Maningrida early February to learn more about Mawurndjul's art and technique. Back at their studio, they tried to reproduce Mawurndjul's work on a large scale. Mawurndjul and Apolline Kohen went to Eumundi to check the samples. After discussions and more experiments, we are now confident that the team

John Mawurndjul with samples at Eumundi, QLD

© Maningrida Arts & Culture



is on the right track to reproduce Mawurndjul's work.

The next step is for Mawurndjul to go to Paris and start working on the column and supervising the team

working on the ceiling.

*Apolline Kohen, Arts Director, Maningrida Arts & Culture*

**Lena Nyadbi** has been painting at the Warmun Art Centre since it was established in 1998. Her paintings of the Jimbala (spearheads) from her father's country have become world renowned and are collected by major galleries in Australia and Europe. It is the image of Jimbala that will be carved in relief on the outside of the new Paris museum. Jimbala country lies to the south of Warmun near the sight of the Daiwul Ngarrankarni (Barramundi Dreaming) which is now where the Argyle Diamond Mine is located.

Lena lives in Warmun with her partner Clancy Patrick and sister Goody Barrett who are also well known artists. She is pleased to have the Jimbala imagery going onto the new Paris building but is reluctant to visit France to see

© Warmun Art Centre



it. Lena says, "Goody has been to Paris and its too cold!".

*Megan Buckley, Manager, Warmun Art Centre*

Above - Lena Nyadbi at the Warmun Art Centre with her Jimbala painting.

# Commission of Indigenous Contemporary Art from Australia to the bank of the River Seine, Paris in 2006

## “Yakumirri”

Will Stubbs, Buku-Larrnggay Mulka

**Q:** What do the following ten people have in common; Wolpa Wanambi, Wukun Wanambi, Gulumbu Yunupingu, Naminapu Maymuru-White, Gawirrin Gumana, Djambawa Marawili, Galuma Maymuru, Yananymul Mununggurr, Baluka Maymuru, Banduk Marika?

**A:** They have all won major Australian art prizes. They are all living artists from North East Arnhem Land. But most people, including many in the art world, do not know who they are.

Despite intense critical acclaim, institutional recognition and sell out solo shows over the last decade, it is a relatively small group of private collectors and museum curators who could pronounce any of their names.

Their art is highly sought after but their names rarely remembered. Perhaps this is because they do not use Anglicised names or maybe because they use natural media, earth pigments, bark and termite

hollowed stringybark trunks instead of the internationally accepted and understood acrylic, canvas and paper.

Other artists from Yirrkala and homelands who have also had successful solo exhibitions but who have struggled to be recognised as individuals are Wanyubi Marika, Nawurapu Wunungmurra, Waturr Gumana, Gunybi Ganambarr and Mulkun Wirrpananda.

Slowly though, over the last ten years, through these prizes and shows, each of them has developed a small personal following to match the regard they are held in at home.

Now, for the first time, each of these individual unsung stars join together in an exhibition at Raft Artspace in Darwin. The exhibition is ‘Yakumirri’.

This word literally means ‘named.’ To say an artist is ‘yakumirri’ means they have a ‘name’ or a profile. The

term is used around the art centre at Yirrkala and amongst artists as a point of pride.

Although it has taken some time for non-Yolngu speakers to learn to say and remember these names, all of these artists are ‘yakumirri’ having won a major prize or had at least one successful solo show. The quality of their work has overcome the barriers of unfamiliar pronunciation and media to the point where people seek their art by name.

This exhibition is a joint celebration of their individual achievements in getting to that level without compromising their law, their art or their identity. It is also a chance for more people to learn these important names.

So at Raft Artspace, Darwin from 15th July we can see the work of each of these individuals together again at last.

## Bula’bula Arts Archive Project

Louise Partos, Manager



Above - Frank Dururrunga and Michael Dawu looking through photos before the rehousing project begins © Bula’bula Arts

In 2004, Bula’bula Arts received a Community Heritage Grant through the National Library of Australia for its archive project. As the title indicates, the aim is to preserve the photographic and document archive at Bula’bula Arts.

A major outcome of the project will be increased access to the collection by artists and other community members. The archive will also hold relevance for individuals and organisations independent of the Ramingining community. These parties include academic researchers, art historians, students of anthropology, interested persons in Aboriginal art, visual historians and many others. A significant element of the project is the digitisation of deteriorating material. It is also anticipated that the sorting and rehousing of the

collection will facilitate the recording of oral histories. This in turn will lead to increased documentation, thereby ensuring the collections relevance and meaning for future generations. However, the most significant benefit will be for the artists and their families at Ramingining. As the collection is being inventoried and sorted, there will be much discussion and amazement about its contents.

Stories will be told, memories relived and children shown images of their family members and works of art which are now housed in galleries, museums and private collections throughout Australia and overseas.

This is why the archive is important for Bula’bula Arts.

## Glass Coolamon Workshop April 2005

Warlayirti Artists, Balgo

Warlayirti Artists recently held a very successful glass workshop to develop a range of limited edition glass coolamons. This success was the product of the participatory planning process, the great input of glass technician Kirstie Rae, a well-known Australian glass artist and teacher, and the artistic ability of participating artists.

The first step in the process was to identify artists to participate in the workshop who were both senior enough to produce coolamons and who had previous experience working with glass. Senior community women met and agreed on a group of men and women to invite to participate in the workshop.

The next step was the development of two prototypes that could be used to slump the glass pieces over to create a coolamon form.

Kirstie worked with a number of the artists to make silica moulds taken from two locally made wooden coolamons.

Artists then worked with a range of glass pieces to create their designs. Many of the stories painted related to the use of coolamons in collecting and carrying bush food. The pieces were then fired once to fuse the glass and a second time to slump them over the moulds. The experience the artists have gained in working with glass over the last five years is reflected in the stunning glass coolamons that have been produced. The small coolamons are currently available from Warlayirti Artists and the large coolamons will be launched at an exhibition in 2006 together with a publication on coolamons.

Warlayirti Artists acknowledge the financial support provided by The

Myer Foundation for the Glass Workshop Program

Image below Marie Mudgetell working on a glass coolamon during the workshop.

© Warlayirti Artists



## OZeCulture

Stephen Hutchison, ANKAAA IT Development Officer

In April this year Lilly Carpenter *Assistant Manager of Munupi Arts and Craft*, Ita Tipungwuti, an *Artist from Jilamara Arts and Craft* and I attended the OZeCulture conference in beautiful Byron Bay. The theme of the conference was "Magic, Money and Myth" and showcased ideas and success stories from the world where the Creative Industries and Cyberspace intersect.

I presented a paper on ANKAAA's proposal to develop a computer based tool known as ArtWeb, that will easily and seamlessly allow

artists living in remote communities to publish their stories and details of their work on to the Internet. ArtWeb would have usability as a key design objective. For example, the user interface will be highly visual with minimal text, the built-in help will be presented aurally in the local language and software would perform consistently irrespective of the quality of the Internet connection. Check it out at [www.ozeculture.com](http://www.ozeculture.com)

The conference also provided the opportunity to network with IT

professionals working to develop similar projects and to look at ways ANKAAA can collaborate on IT projects with organisations such as the National Museum of Australia and Museums Victoria.

The conference was a terrific opportunity for Lilly and Ita. Lilly said "I really enjoyed the New Zealand presentation, especially on Te Papa (Museum.) It was good talking to others and to see how they worked, and it was good to explain to others what we're doing at Munupi and with ANKAAA."

## Gunbalanya (Oenpelli) Cultural Open Day

Saturday 20th August 2005

The community, through its traditional owners, welcome guests to observe the beautiful country, share in the culture of the Kunwinjku speaking people of western Arnhem Land and enjoy their hospitality. Located 300 kms east of Darwin

and 70 kms from Jabiru. Features include sports carnival, scenic flights, rock art tours, cultural dancing, bush foods and didjeridu playing demonstrations. Aboriginal bands will perform and a visit to Injalak Arts and Crafts is a must.

Camping overnight is permitted (leaving the community first thing on Sunday.) No alcohol except purchased at the community club. Further information phone 08 8979 0170.

### New ANKAAA details

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Munupi Arts & Crafts farewell Diana Stewart in June and welcome new Manager Tara Leckey. Tara has worked with Aboriginal artists in a variety of community settings including Yuendumu with Warlukurlangu Artists, Haasts Bluff with Ikuntji Artists and the Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjarra, Yankuntjatjara region with Tjanpi Aboriginal Baskets and recently with Kayili Artists in the Gibson Desert. Tara worked with Northern Editions in 2001-2002 and is excited to be back in the Top End to work with the wonderful Tiwi artists at Pularumpi.

Assistant Manager Lilly Carpenter has left Munupi Arts & Crafts & re-located to Darwin & is now with the Tiwi Art Network.

**Warlayirti Artists, Balgo** Sarah Mengler starts as the Art Centre Development Assistant on 23rd June. Sarah is coming from Canberra and has a Masters Degree in Art History and Curatorship.

#### Buku-Larrnggay Mulka, Yirrkala

We have lost Jeremy Cloake after 4 years during which he gave us a very strong yidaki business. Randin Graves a musician and yidaki specialist

from San Diego who has been involved with Yirrkala yidaki for the last decade most recently as a Fullbright scholar has joined Buku. Sasha Earle has left after three years of coordinating the Print shop, the Garma Festival's Gapan Gallery and the Darwin Festival's Galuku Gallery. Araluen Maymuru is taking on her role and will be guiding the Print shop through those Festivals and into its etching phase. Sophie Waugh, daughter of artist Gundimolk Wanambi, is on board as 'front of house'. We also have artists Wukun Wanambi and Napuwarri Marawili moonlighting as Artswokers and a young trainee, Bamuwuy Ganambarr.

**Waralungku Arts** Miriam Charlie a local yanula/karwa women is now working at the art centre assisting in cataloguing, sales and supplying materials to artists.

**YBE Art Centre** (formerly Nambara,) Nhulunbuy fare welled Manager Michelle Konicek in April & welcomed new Manager Sue Richards.

**Injalak Arts & Crafts** Rebecca Say and Federica Lazzarini have recently joined Injalak. Rebecca comes from Mimi Arts & Crafts in Katherine and will take on the Arts and Cultural Officer role. Federica as Finance and Sales Officer. Andrew Sinclair will be joining Injalak as a print maker and to manage the screen print workshop.

The Museum & Art Gallery of the Northern Territory (MAGNT) Curator of Indigenous Art, Margie West has retired from her position after over 25 years with the Museum

**Australia Council for the Arts** Chris Sarra has been appointed as the Chair of the Australia Council's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Board (ATSIAB)



Chairperson **Terry (Djambawa) Marawili** Buku-Larrnggay Mulka *Arnhem Land Region*

Vice Chairperson **John Martin Tipungwuti** Jilamara Arts & Craft Association *Tiwi Islands Region*

Secretary **Peggy Griffith** Waringarri Aboriginal Arts *Kimberley Region*

Treasurer **Alice Snape** Coomalie Cultural Centre *Katherine Region*

**Gary Lee** Darwin based artist & curator

**Freddie Timms** Jirrawun Aboriginal Art Corporation *Kimberley Region*

**Tommy May** Mangkaja Arts Resource Agency Aboriginal Corporation *Kimberley Region*

**Richard Birrinbirrin** Bula'bula Arts Aboriginal Corporation *Arnhem Land Region*

**John Mawurndjul** Maningrida Arts & Culture *Arnhem Land Region*

**Jeannie Herbert** Mimi Arts & Crafts *Katherine Region*

**Marita Sambono** Merrepen Arts Aboriginal Corporation *Katherine Region*

**Regis Pangiraminni** Munupi Arts & Crafts Association *Tiwi Islands Region*

## ANKAAA Staff

2005



**Stephanie Hawkins** Manager

**Susie Blake** Industry Development Officer (Kununurra Based)

**Michelle Culpitt** Industry Development Officer (Darwin Based)

**Charmaine Wharton Whall** Industry Development Officer (Katherine Based)

**Stephen Hutchison** I.T Development Officer

**Erica Luchich** Office Manager & Bookkeeper