

ANKAAA Arts BACKBONE

Association of Northern, Kimberley and Arnhem Aboriginal Artists

Working together to keep art, country and culture strong

Volume 9: Issues 2-3, December 2009



© Wamud Namak Nayuyungi - The first people
Image courtesy Injalak Arts, Northern Territory and Mossenson Galleries, Melbourne, with the permission of the artist's family

ANKAAA Value Statement

What is True and Important to Us

Aboriginal culture is central to everything we do and is respected within ANKAAA.

ANKAAA respects and listens to the Aboriginal artists who are its members.

Teaching happens right here on country between families and generations, and that is the right way because it teaches respect for country and culture.

Art is old. It was passed on from our ancestors to our grandfathers to our fathers to us... Art is talking about the land, the sea, about our culture, about our connection, about our kinship relationships – songs, dance, names, places, country, sacred sites. All these things are important to us.

Art is important for communities; it is a life-long journey to respect our culture and stay strong and for children to learn two-ways.

Art centres need to be strong to enable good business and income for artists and families and build a future for our children in their own communities.

ANKAAA needs to be strong on the inside (operationally) so it can be strong on the outside (to effectively serve members and work with the wider sector).

ANKAAA is a meeting place: working together and sharing information between Aboriginal artists and Art Centres, and two-way information between Aboriginal artists, government and industry.

It is important to balance culture and money business in everything.

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ANKAAA is a non-profit incorporated Aboriginal Association.

ANKAAA Value Statement (p.2) outlines values identified by ANKAAA members in planning meetings in 2007, with words determined by ANKAAA Directors on 06.12.07.

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Production Team: Danielle Cullen and
Jessica Booth

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Homeland is a really special place. It is our land. We are breathing on that country. We can see the future from that country. We need to make a home there for our younger generations, like in other parts of Australia. If the size of the population of communities on country is growing, we need to settle them down and create jobs. People will live in their homeland and have jobs. Education of all sorts should be developing there: including education about how to manage the country, improve the country, develop the economy and of course education about art.

The art movement is growing up now. Young people are interested. People are doing their own patterns and designs and stories in their countries. We need to support them. They are respecting the country and telling wider Australia and the world why everyone should respect the country and not destroy it.

It was really important for ANKAAA to play a role organizing that artists panel at Gulkula about art and homelands (see report p. 12). It was really important that our senior artists, Directors and CEO were involved. We got the message through very clearly from them that it is all about the land and the art, and that we need to see more understanding about the importance of the homelands to art.

Recently at one of our remote area homelands (Yilpara at Blue Mud Bay) there was a 'two-way learning centre' about country and art, which was really important and good for our local people. They saw how outside people (artists and scientists) could come to their country and work and learn with them, hand in hand, exchanging knowledge and understanding about the country (see article p. 20).

No one will tell us to go away. We will

be living in that country.

As an Aboriginal art association ANKAAA is now permanently standing strong. We need to keep on developing it for the young people to come along.

Djambawa Marawili

Djambawa Marawili

Notice from the ANKAAA CEO - Christina Davidson

ANKAAA has built up a strong new team of staff this year. From late 2009 there will be five fulltime staff in the ANKAAA office and a further part time position commences in February 2010. A big welcome to new staff and thank you to the team which continues to work very hard with good humour, together with the ANKAAA membership, to 'keep art, country and culture strong'.

In the first half of 2009 the ANKAAA board accepted management of a large NT Arts Infrastructure Project (s), funded through the Aboriginal Benefits Account. This is a new type of undertaking for ANKAAA and the board and I worked together closely with business consultant Peter Shepherd to carefully consider risks and benefits of ANKAAA managing the project and to design a separate project management structure and project team (see article p. 16). The NT Infrastructure Project (s) will deliver projects with \$5.8 million funding which ANKAAA secured for eighteen Art Centres from ABA.

ANKAAA's 2009 regional meetings have been held for: Arnhem Land (Gulkula, August); Tiwi (Bathurst Island, October); and Kimberley (November) and have been a wonderful opportunity for members to share ideas and perspectives. The Katherine regional meeting is scheduled for 24 November just before the AGM on 25 November at Adelaide River.

Finally ANKAAA thanks all the artists and Art Centre Managers, as well as our industry partners and major funders for 2009 - DEWHA, the Australia Council for the Arts and Arts NT - very warmly for their sharing, support and work together over 2009.

Christina Davidson

Elcho Arts Makes its Mark

By Dion Teasdale, Elcho Island Arts



Elcho Arts cultural liaison officer and highly sought-after fibre artist, Mavis Ganambarr, preparing for her solo exhibition in Sydney. Photo: Dion Teasdale.



Some of the fibre work created by artists from Elcho Island available from the Elcho Arts. Photo: Dion Teasdale.

Artists from Elcho Island have been making their mark across Australia over the past twelve months thanks to the revitalisation of the local Art centre.

Situated in the Arafura Sea about 550 kms north east of Darwin, Elcho Island is known for its many cultural exports. Famous artists who call Elcho home include Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu, the Chooky Dancers and hundreds of visual artists who create Aboriginal art that is exhibited and held in collections nationally and internationally.

Elcho Island Arts has been community managed since 1992 and operates out of the Marthakal Arts Hub in Galiwin'ku (the main town on the island). The Arts Hub is perched on a cliff offering panoramic views of the beach and surrounding islands, and has two galleries, a retail outlet, and an artists' studio.

Over its history, Elcho Island Arts has developed a strong reputation for the quality of work produced by its artists; their respect of clan totems, the originality of their designs and their use of traditional bush materials and natural earth pigments.

Art work produced by Elcho artists include Morning Star Poles (sacred mortuary poles adorned with feathers), Mokuy Spirit carvings, fibre art such as baskets, dilly bags and sun mats, bark paintings and hollow logs, jewellery and works on paper.

This year has been one of the busiest and most successful at Elcho Island Arts. In 2009 artists from Elcho have appeared in exhibitions in Darwin, Sydney, Melbourne, Perth and Brisbane.

After winning the \$25,000 RAKA Award in 2008, this year Morning

Star Pole custodian Gali Yalkarriwuy Gurruwiwi was a finalist in the Western Australian Indigenous Art Awards and the 26th Telstra (NATSIAA) Awards and a suite of his work was acquired by the National Gallery of Australia.

Works by fibre artist Mavis Ganambarr have featured in three exhibitions nationally - as part of the touring fibre show *ReCoil*, in *Floating Life* at the Queensland Art Gallery and in a solo show at Sydney's Birrung Gallery.

Other highlights of the year have included workshops with printmakers from Basil Hall Editions in Darwin and jewellery-making with Alice Whish Designs from Sydney, visits from seven cruise ships, the introduction of artist led

culture tours on homelands, attendance at the Garma Festival, refurbishment of the Art Centre and visits from Federal Government Ministers Peter Garrett and Jenny Macklin.

With group and solo exhibitions planned in capital cities across Australia as well as in the US and the UK, 2010 promises to be an even busier and more successful year for Elcho Island Arts and its artists.

Right: Elcho Island elder, Richard Gandhuwuy, mixing up ochre on the beach of his homeland, Dhambala. Photo: Dion Teasdale.

Below: Morning Star Pole custodian, Gali Yalkarriwuy Gurruwiwi performed the Banumbirr ceremony on-board the Orion cruise ship in April. Photo Dion Teasdale.



In London

By Faith Thompson Nelson, Ngukurr Art



At the end of June I went to London for my first solo exhibition at Rebecca Hossack Gallery on Charlotte Street in London. It was great - I had people from all over the world coming and asking me about my work. There were many guests at the opening. I spoke to a lot of people and showed them the book written by Simon Normand and my mother Maureen Marrangulu Thompson about her country called *Marranbala Country*.

I also visited Rebecca's other gallery in Conway Street where there was an exhibition of paintings by Utopia artists.

Above Left: Faith Thompson Nelson in front of her painting. Photo: Ngukurr Arts, Northern Territory.

Above Right: Faith Thompson Nelson at Regent's Park. Photo: Ngukurr Arts, Northern Territory.

Middle Right: Faith Thompson Nelson with Germaine Greer & Rebecca Hossack in London this year. Photo: Rebecca Hossack Gallery, London.

Bottom Right: Faith Thompson Nelson at the British Museum with Monet painting. Photo: Rebecca Hossack Gallery, London.



I was invited to include one of my paintings in this show because I am from this area – my Father's country is Utopia but I was brought up in my Mother's country - Limmen Bight. I met Germaine Greer, who opened the exhibition, and we discussed my work.

I visited Buckingham Palace and saw the Royal Guard on horseback. I visited Australia House and a lady took us on a tour and looked at the old photos. I went to the Museum of Natural History where I saw big dinosaur skeletons and was invited to an exhibition at the British Museum. I journeyed to the centre of the earth to go on the underground rail system. We took a ferry down the Thames and saw the London Eye and Big Ben; we also went on one of those big red buses and in a really fancy black taxi with automatic doors.

My favourite parts of the trip were visiting the two gardens – the Queen's Rose Garden, I liked the smell of it – a beautiful perfume, and the Avenue Gardens at Regent's Park. I also liked wandering around London watching the local people.



An Invitation - Buku Larrnggay Mulka at the 3rd Moscow Biennale

By Andrew Blake, Buku Larrnggay Mulka

About four months ago Jean-Hubert Martin (Curator of the National Museums of France, former director of Centre Pompidou and curator of the landmark exhibition *Magiciens de la Terre*), invited Djambawa Marawili and Nawurapu Wunungmurra to participate in the 3rd Moscow Biennale. Djambawa had continued to maintain his power as a great artist and Nawurapu was receiving local and national attention for his carved skeletal forms.

Our mission in Moscow was to gauge the reactions of Russian state run art institutions and private galleries to the art of the Yolngu of northeast Arnhem Land. Our fall back position was to hang out at the Garage Centre for Contemporary Culture (a massive constructivist Art Deco bus depot built in 1926) - the venue for Jean-Hubert's exhibition *Without Exclusion* - the main gig of the Biennale where Djambawa's and Nawurapu's art was displayed. On opening night Djambawa held court amongst his six barks - singing his paintings in traditional and flamboyant style, captured by a French television crew for national screening in November. Nawurapu's Moku, carvings of the spirit, also

received avid attention and were known to move about the venue after lights out.

We attended meetings organised for us by Austrade in Moscow with the Vice Director of the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts and the Director of the State run Centre for Contemporary Culture. Both institutions would be more than happy to put up appropriate space within hallowed walls if the curatorial work was of standard and if costs/ sponsorship were to be met or sourced by us - so we discovered that nothing is impossible in Moscow. The commercial and non-profit cooperatives were savvy, enthusiastic and well connected. These are the most likely first places to export Yolngu art. An interesting cooperative - M'ARS the Centre for Contemporary Arts were showing video installations as part of the Biennale program and the Director enjoyed the idea of working with young Yolngu contemporaries of The Mulka Project.

They liked our art in Moscow. Leonid Bazhanov, Director of the Centre for Contemporary Culture in Moscow, said, 'the people of Russia do not yet know much about contemporary art.' Well



Djambawa Marawili in Red Square. Mobile phone photo.

Photo: Buku Larrnggay Mulka.

perhaps we don't either but we now know that Moscow has a hunger for the new and a momentum giving faith that in all its apparent new found wealth, incredible glamour and tough facades it will get through the economic crisis and our contemporary art (with its unfrayed hawser connecting the different epochs of Yolngu art) will be enjoyed and understood internationally. This is where we can be, this is where we are - from the homelands of northeast Arnhem Land to Moscow and with out exclusion.



Dianne, Liyawaday & Djambawa outside the Garage Centre for Contemporary Culture Moscow, 2009. Photo: Buku Larrnggay Mulka.



Nawurapu Wunungmurra's installation at the Moscow Biennale. Photo: Buku Larrnggay Mulka.

Hard Work Rewarded

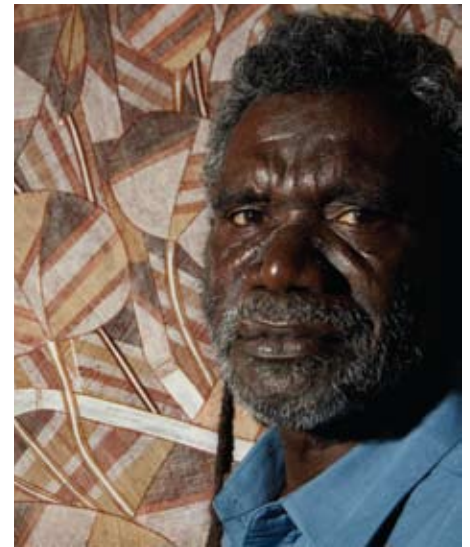
ANKAAA Members Scoop Art Awards

Five prestigious awards have recently been received by ANKAAA member artists. Two artists from Arnhem Land have won prizes at the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award, August 2009. The Telstra Work on Paper Award was awarded to Glen Namundja from Injalak Arts and Crafts for his work *Likkanaya and Marrayka*. The artwork is a representation of the Yawkyawk Dreamtime story about two sisters travelling through the country where Ngalyod, the Rainbow Serpent swallowed them whole. Rerrkirrwanga Mununggurr from Buku Larrnggay Mulka won the Telstra Bark Painting Award for her work *Gumatj Gurtha*. Rerrkirrwanga's painting depicts her husband's Gumatj clan designs of sacred fire. Rerrkirrwanga is the daughter of late Djapu clan elder Djutjadjuta Mununggurr, winner of the Telstra Bark Painting Award in 1997.

In July Mangkaja Arts' Wakartu Cory Surprise was the recipient of the Western Australian Artist Award at

the Western Australian Indigenous Art Awards 2009. Culture and the Arts Minister John Day praised 'her intuitive use of colour and free gesture which reveals an affinity to her country. These daring and vital works astonished the judges.' Anniebell Marrngamarrnga was the winner of the Togart Contemporary Art Award (NT, September 2009) for *Yawkyawk*, an exquisite and detailed sculptural weaving. Anniebell learnt how to weave from her mother and paint from her father, and says: 'my favourite subject is to represent the yawkyawk spirit who lives in the water at Kubumi. It is my husband's Dreaming. I represent her in bark paintings, in my timber carvings and also in my weaving ... I came with the idea to make flat yawkyawks from pandanus ... I use lots of different colours ... colours are important in my work.' (Maningrida Arts and Culture, Feb. 2007)

Finally, congratulations to John Mawurndjul from Maningrida Arts and



Culture who won The Artist Award at the Third Biennial Melbourne Art Foundation Awards for the Visual Arts held at the Art Gallery of New South Wales in September. The award recognises the outstanding achievement made by an Australian artist – someone who has created a significant body of work and one that has had a considerable impact on Australian contemporary art practice.

Above: Glen Namundja, winner of the Work on Paper Award, 26th Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award, in front of his artwork *Likkanaya and Marrayka*, natural pigments on paper, 132 x 104 cm. Photo: Courtesy Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory.

Below Left: Wakartu Cory Surprise with her work, *Manabularnbularn Warla*, atelier acrylic paint, 120 x 90 cm. Photo: Mangkaja Arts.

Below: Anniebell Marrngamarrnga with her award winning work, *Yawkyawk*. Photo: Jim Lee.



Tiwi Art Network Annual Exhibition

By Brooke Ravens, Tiwi Art Network

It's the biggest Tiwi show of the year - and 2009 didn't disappoint. *Mukumuwu – To be Together* was held at the Holiday Inn, Darwin from 12 – 16 August. Coinciding with the Darwin Festival and the 26th Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards (NATSIAA), the annual event is a collaboration between the three art centres on the Tiwi Islands: Munupi Arts and Crafts, Tiwi Design and Jilamara Arts and Craft.

The show was a huge success, with record numbers attending the opening breakfast. John Wilson from Jilamara officially opened the exhibition and



Installation shot of *Mukumuwu – To be Together*, annual Tiwi Art Network exhibition at the Holiday Inn, Darwin, in August. Photo: Nicolas Gouldhurst.

Jean Baptiste Apuatimi from Tiwi Design enthralled the crowd with a performance of her buffalo dance.

Visitors perused the geometric ochre wonders of the Tiwi people. There was a fantastic response with many visitors commenting on the strength of works and the richness and diversity of styles evident in Tiwi art.

Praxedes Tipungwuti and Douglas Vivien Kerinauia, from Tiwi Design, participated in professional development training during the exhibition. We would like to thank ANKAAA for their support in this project.



Installation shot of *Mukumuwu – To be Together*, August 2009. Photo: ANKAAA.



LR Raelene Kerinauia, Janice Murray, Maria Josette Orsto, Jean Baptiste Apuatimi, Ita Tipungwuti, John Wilson, Margaret Renne Kerinauia, Douglas Vivien Kerinauia, Praxedes Tipungwuti. Photo: Nicolas Gouldhurst.



John Wilson Wuribudiwa with his Purukupali sculpture Photo: ANKAAA.

Kimberley Aboriginal Artists, *Sharing Difference On Common Ground* By Kimberley Aboriginal Artists

Four Art Centres: Warmun Art, Mangkaja Arts, Mowanjumb Art and Culture Centre and Waringarri Aboriginal Arts, united as Kimberley Aboriginal Artists (KAA) to stage their first joint exhibition launched at the Holmes à Court Gallery, Perth, this October. *Sharing Difference On Common Ground* celebrates the breadth and diversity of creativity from across the Kimberley region. To compliment this milestone exhibition, KAA Art Centres also held commercial exhibitions at their respective galleries in Perth: Gadfly Gallery, Mossenson's Indigenart, Randall Lane Fine Art, and Seva Frangos Art.

Sharon Tassicker, the Director of the Holmes à Court Gallery, said: 'Connection to [ownership of] Country is common ground for Aboriginal people across Australia. Kimberley Aboriginal Artists was established in the context of this solidarity with the aim of sharing the richness and diversity of their art, language and identity. *Sharing*

Difference On Common Ground is a show of strength and collaboration and, in the context of Country, community and particular art practice, is an expression of multifaceted diversity'.

Mowanjumb artist Leah Umbagai commended Sharon for the selection of works and the hang which brings together such a diverse body of work. She said 'It was good to have so many artists from the Kimberley at the opening in Perth and I met and talked to lots of people.'

The proceedings began with a warm welcome to Country by Senior Nyoongar man Richard Walley AOM. The Hon. Tom Stephens MLA, gave a passionate and knowledgeable account of the art and people of the Kimberley as he opened the exhibition. And cultural performances by artists then lead the crowd into the gallery. Alan Griffiths from Waringarri Art sang in Mirawoong language, while Agnes, Peggy, Phyllis,

Minnie and granddaughter Shana danced. Gabrielle Nodea, Chairperson of Warmun Art danced and spoke with great strength. He explained:

The most important thing I want to communicate through the exhibition is that our Art Centre is our last line of defence. It is living the Warmun dream, chasing the Gija destiny. Corroboree and painting are like our archives. This is what the Art Centre is. That's what the old people wanted. It keeps us strong and keeps connection to Country and gives us the strength to live in the white man's world.

Chairperson of Waringarri Arts, Carol Hapke, writes:

Artists from Waringarri want to share their culture and demonstrate their dedication to the preservation of their Culture through the arts, and to be able to show our really important places and to share them with the rest of the world.



During speeches at the Kimberley Aboriginal Artists opening. Photo: Tim Acker, Kimberley Aboriginal Artists.

Best of the Best II: Waringarri, Warmun & Warnayaka on Show



Gabriel Nodea, Chairman of Warmun Arts, at the opening of the exhibition. Photo: Tim Acker, Kimberley Aboriginal Artists.

We want the rest of the world to take some notice. To take some interest in what we actually have here – a very rich culture. White culture hasn't been interested for so long.

Kimberley Aboriginal Artists would like thank Janet Holmes à Court for hosting their inaugural joint exhibition and acknowledges her strong commitment and support to put them on the map. ANKAAA also assisted artists' travel to the opening. KAA are planning to tour the exhibition nationally following its debut in Perth.

The exhibition is accompanied by a 96 page colour catalogue containing: statements by Indigenous leaders from the Art Centres and essays by Pat Dodson, Judith Ryan

and others addressing the Kimberley and its art and culture. Contact www.kimberleyaboriginalart.com.au to purchase the catalogue.



Cover of *Sharing Difference on Common Ground* exhibition catalogue. Photo: Tim Acker, Kimberley Aboriginal Artists.

In August a group exhibition entitled *Best of the Best II* at Framed Gallery in Darwin brought together work from Waringarri Arts, Warmun Art Centre and Warnayaka Art. The exhibition was opened by Dr Jacqueline Healy, Director Bundoora Homestead Art Centre with Chris Griffiths from Waringarri Artists, Valda Dixon from Warnayaka Art and Mabel Juli from Warmun Art Centre all taking the mike to say a few words to the opening night crowd.

Anne Phelan from Framed Gallery said, 'it is always a delight to work with such professional art advisors as the three from these Centres who give their heart and soul to the job and we were grateful that so many artists could come to enjoy the limelight for a few hours.



Top: Minnie Lumai, Chris Griffiths & Chris Griffiths Jnr in front of Waringarri Dancers by Alan Griffiths Photo: ANKAAA.

Above: Warnayaka artists L-R Louisa Napalgarri Payton, Judy Napangardi Martin, Biddy Nungurrayi Long, Mercia Napurrula Lewis, Chamain Brown, Rosie Napurrula Tasman, Lily Nungurrayi Hargraves, Judy Napljarri Walker, Valda Nangala Dixon. Photo: ANKAAA.

Art and Homelands Movement - ANKAAA Panel at Garma 2009

Gulkula, East Arnhem Land

Senior artists came together from across the Top End for a forum convened by ANKAAA, addressing the relationship between contemporary art and their homelands. Panelists stressed the vital and abiding relationship between homelands and the Indigenous art movement. For a full transcript of the discussion, please go to www.ankaaa.org.au.

"...Homeland is really important to me... It's where I can breathe fresh wind, where I can walk along the beach or in the bushes – that's giving me strength. And all those things are all you need under the land. People who are living in the country, they know. They are getting strong by their land and their patterns."

Djambawa Marawili



"I would like to bring my people back up in the plateau so they can sit at home, look after home...because everything in the bush, our homeland, it's a spiritual country – connected with our stories beyond our belief, from generations after generations after generations."

Dean Yibarbuk on behalf of Wamud Namok



"I didn't move to the outstation because I like it that way... The reason is that I will be handing over properly and professionally their lives back into the land. That is the number one story..."

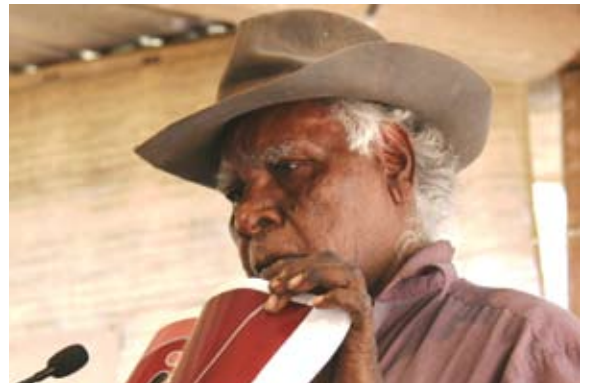
...That is the only life over there... Go and get your fresh food – fish, wild honey, shell, eat fresh. That's the purpose for homelands...

...That this culture is strong and maintained; that is the purpose."

Richard Gandhuwuy



L - R: Freddie Timms, Ray Nadjamerrek, Wamud Namok, Dean Yibarbuk, Dion Teasdale, Richard Gandhuwuy and Djambawa Marawili. All photos: © Yothu Yindi Foundation



"I want to try to get help...I need help for my homeland."

Freddie Timms

ANKAAA Panelists:

Djambawa Marawili: Yilpara Homeland, Blue Mud Bay, North East Arnhem Land; Buku Larrnggay Mulka Art Centre; ANKAAA Chairman.

Wamud Namok (deceased): Kabulwarnamyo Homeland, Central Arnhem Land Plateau, West Arnhem Land; Injalak Arts, Gunbalanya. Supported by: Dean Yibarbuk and his grandson Ray Nadjamerrek.

Freddie Timms, Ngarrmaliny (naramali), Janama: President Jirrawun Arts, Wyndham, WA; ANKAAA Director.

Richard Gandhuwuy: Dhambala Homeland; Chairperson Elcho Island Arts, Marthakal Homelands Resource Centre, Galiwin'ku.

Panel chairperson: Christina Davidson, ANKAAA CEO.

ANKAAA at Garma 2009

Gulkula, East Arnhem Land



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1. ANKAAA members (R - L), Maryanne Sturt, friend, Myra Herbert, Valda Dixon, Donna Burak, Jennifer Jackson.
 2. Maryanne Sturt, ANKAAA Director, Waringarri Art, Kununurra.
 3. ANKAAA Board of Directors Meeting at Gulkula, August 8.
 4. ANKAAA Group Photo: (back row L - R) Fabian Marawili, Isaiah Nagurgurba, Richard Ganduwuy, Ruth Nalmakarra, Shirley Minygululu, Freddie Timms, Ray Nadjamerrek, Thisbie Purich, Donna Burak, Danielle Cullen, Dean Yibarbuk (middle row L - R) Katie O'Connell, Brian Farmer, Maryanne Sturt, Richard Birrin Birrin, Tony Nadjalaburnburn, Christina Davidson (front row), Peter Minygululu, Myra Herbert, Wamud Namok, Valda Dixon, Djambawa Marawili.
 5. Gapan Gallery print exhibition, Buku Larrnggay Mulka Centre.
 6. (L - R) Lydia Miller, Executive Director, ATSI, Australia Council for the Arts, Dr Mark Bin Baker, Chair, ATSI, Australia Council and Djambawa Marawili, Chair ANKAAA. Key Forum plenary, August 8.
 7. ANKAAA 2009 Arnhem Regional Meeting.
 8. Ruth Nalmakara, ANKAAA Director, Acting Chairperson, ANKAAA Board of Directors Meeting, August 9.
 9. ANKAAA campsite: (L - R) Ray Nadjamerrek, Dean Yibarbuk, Tony Nadjalaburnburn, Brian Farmer, Richard Birrin Birrin, Isaiah Nagurgurba.
- All photos: © Yothu Yindi Foundation

Starting a Permanent Collection in Gapuwiyak

By Tara Leckey

Art Worker Focus, Marcus Pascoe
by Claire Summers

A permanent collection of fibre work has been developed in Gapuwiyak with funding from Arts NT. The project was initiated to coincide with the establishment of the community's new culture centre, and the result is a beautiful collection of forty fibre works created by twenty-nine artists from Gapuwiyak and some of the nearby homelands. The collection was exhibited at the culture centre opening event in June this year. When the weavers saw their work displayed for everyone to see, they were very proud.

Wanapuyungu, Project Leader

Works in other mediums will be acquired for the collection as funds allow, and one day Gapuwiyak Culture and Arts hopes to build a special museum for our collection.

Below: Basket with String Handles by Rudy Bidingal. Photo: Claire Reynolds.

Bottom: Diving Duck by Penny Wanapuyungu. Photo: Claire Reynolds.



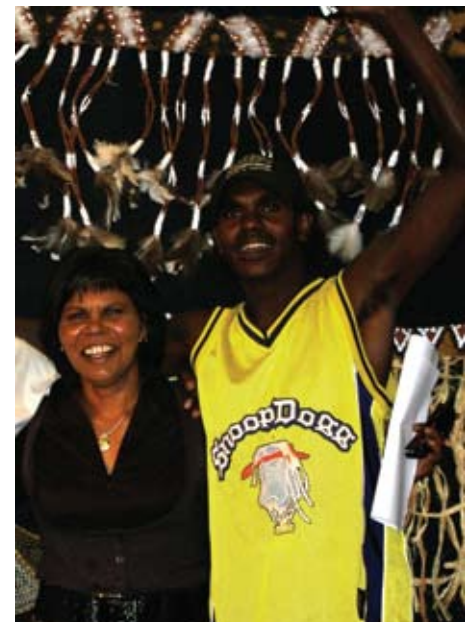
Project workers Cait Wait, Silke Roth and Lucy Wanapuyungu worked closely together to make sure that as many weavers as possible were represented in the collection, which includes mats, baskets, string bags, necklaces, a diving duck and an echidna.

'We made this collection because we are famous women! [laughs] We talked a lot about the young kids, for the future, so they can see our work if any ladies are gone. We can show people our work, show them how we get the dye and make everything from the bush'. Lucy



Marcus Pascoe has been working for Maningrida Arts and Culture (MAC) for nine years. He was originally employed through the CDEP program as the Art Centre's gallery assistant and was responsible for serving customers, organising freight, ensuring conservation standards were met, helping to catalogue and tag artworks and for conducting tours of the Djomi Museum. In 2008 Marcus was appointed Gallery Supervisor. Marcus has learnt many news skills through computer training funded by ANKAAA and uses the AMS database to find information about artworks, artists and customers. ANKAAA has funded Marcus to travel into Darwin to participate in the Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair and the MAC Gallery exhibition several times. He helps hang the shows and gains a great understanding of the different ways Balanda (non-Indigenous people) appreciate and buy Indigenous artwork. Marcus then returns to work and explains to the community how galleries operate and what happens to the work once it leaves Maningrida. Marcus works incredibly hard and brings a wonderful enthusiasm to the work place.

Below: Marcus Pascoe with Marion Scrymgour
Photo: Maningrida Arts and Culture.



nagawaranin ngini ngawula imanka - Keeping Our Spirit Alive

By Cher Breeze, Jilamara Arts & Crafts Arts

Since Jilamara Arts and Craft was formed in 1988 there has been an ongoing process of artists teaching young people culture through dance, song and art. This year Jilamara artists have been working hard, teaching not only students from Milikapiti Public School, but senior and junior students from Tiwi College.

At Jilamara the students are immersed in Tiwi culture through interactions with their knowledgeable elders. Learning about their culture from people they know and respect as leaders in the community positively enhances their experience, and ensures future leaders of the Tiwi Islands are fully equipped

with knowledge of Tiwi language, art, songs, dance, natural resources and history. The artists teach the students many different aspects of their culture in a 'hands-on,' open, fun and creative manner. Resources from the Muluwurri Museum enhance each student's visual language and aid in presenting cultural lessons. Students are taught *through* culture, not *about* culture.

This exciting way of teaching brings depth to learning and the students gain confidence, build respect, improve communication with older people and pass on their knowledge to siblings and extended families. With an ongoing cycle of learning, evaluation

and program improvement, the artists of Jilamara envision their teaching will continue for many years to bridge the gap between what we know and what we do.



Glen Farmer and Pedro Wonaeamirri give a lesson on country. Photo: Jilamara Arts and Craft.

Reconnecting to Culture - Arts in the Grass:

Larrakia Nation Long Grass Project 2009

By Katie O'Connell



A new program established by Larrakia Nation is focusing on the often forgotten long grass mobs in our community. Larrakia Nation, in cooperation with HEAL (Healthy Engagement and Assistance in the long grass), has embarked on a program that provides art materials and tuition to assist long grass artists in expressing their stories through painting, in a humbug and alcohol free environment.

The pilot eight-week program, funded by

Arts NT, will culminate in an exhibition of artworks at the Darwin Entertainment Centre later this year. Many people, through circumstance, become stuck in the long grass of Darwin and are unable to reconnect to their country, family and culture. The program aims to bring this connection back to people in the parks around Darwin and so far has provided great individual and group successes. The art program also provides meals, facilities and support to the artists.

Russell Lilford, Director of Larrakia Nation, is proud of the response and the respect that the program is receiving within the local and wider community. 'We can all work together to lift our spirits and demonstrate our capacity to make a valuable contribution to the community, no matter where any of us sleep. The project is not about money, the idea is that if you are making art you might see beyond your current situation

and reconnect you to what is really important to all of us...culture.'



Top Left: Priscilla completing a painting at the camp.

Top Right: Arts in the Grass – Tiwi camp.

Bottom Right: Arts in the Grass – Tiwi camp.

All photos: ANKAAA.

Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair 2009 - Working Together

By Danielle Cullen

In August the Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair (DAAF), organised by Top End Arts Marketing, provided a great opportunity for Art Centres across Australia to represent themselves to the visitors and the art market. ANKAAA provided assistance for seventeen Indigenous arts workers from eight Art Centres to attend DAAF and gain experience in retailing and marketing their Art Centres to the public. They also got the opportunity to meet and network with commercial gallerists & collectors in town for the NATSIAA Awards.

Sponsored arts workers were Judy Manany and Mavis Ganambarr from Elcho Island Arts, David Bullen Rogers from Mangkaja Arts, Marcus Pascoe and Sidney Ali from Maningrida Arts & Culture, Emma Gundurrubuy and Raymond Bulumbula from Milingimbi Art & Culture, Linda Nasinga and Selma Golder from Mardbalk Arts & Crafts, Leah Umbagai from Mowanjurn Artists, Nancy McDinny and Amy Friday from Waralungku Arts, Chris Griffiths and Agnes Armstrong from Waringarri Arts, and Roberta Daylight, Jane Yalunga and Marika Mung from Warmun Art Centre.



Jane Yalunga said: 'It was good. For next time we'll take some ochre to show them. It was good for meeting people, real good. Talk about that Warmun Art. Thinking about taking more painting next time. All sold! ... Good for us mob, sticking together, taking turns working. Like with that ANKAAA T-Shirt, look good... Those other girls (Roberta Daylight and Marika Mung) found it good. Good for going round and going

in those booths and meeting them other galleries. Next time we'd like to go to some other Art Centres and go and see some different galleries.'

Marcus Pascoe said: 'The first thing that I did at the art fair was set it up. Then we served customers and sold our stuff, then they paid and we wrote the invoices by hand. We took them to Pack & Send and showed



NT Arts Infrastructure Project

By Jessica Booth

them the packing room and how they should pack the artwork to send home. People asked me the story for the paintings. We sold a lot of stuff - we did well and it was good to learn.'

ANKAAA Director Donna Burak manned the ANKAAA stand and answered numerous questions from an interested public. Rebecca Laubi from Arts Law was also on hand to give advice to artists and to talk to the public. Our stand was well attended with lots of people admiring Peter Eve's great photographs and picking up industry information.

The 3rd Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair was a major success with total sales reaching over the \$600,000 mark and an estimate of a further \$200,000 generated in on-sales.



From P.16 Bottom Left: ANKAAA Director, Donna Burak and Katie O'Connell at ANKAAA Art Fair stall. Photo: ANKAAA.

P.16. Top Right: Marika Mung & Jane Yalunga from Warmun Art Centre. Photo: ANKAAA.

P.16 Bottom Right: Leah Umbagai from Mowanjum Artists Photo: ANKAAA.

Above: Marcus Pascoe from Maningrida Arts & Culture. Photo: ANKAAA.



ANKAAA has been successful in securing \$5.8 million in infrastructure funding for seventeen member Art Centres from the Aboriginal Benefits Account (ABA), administered through the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs. A fantastic achievement, this is one of the first times ABA funding has been put towards Art Centre infrastructure.

ANKAAA has developed a strong team of qualified professionals to work alongside of the already established ANKAAA staff to manage fifteen of the infrastructure projects with Art Centres. The team has a wealth of collective knowledge of working with Indigenous communities. Paul Nowland, Project Manager and Construction Manager, (Nowland Builders Pty. Ltd.), grew up in Milingimbi and has over thirty years experience in the NT building industry. Legal advisor Dominic McCormack, (Bowden & McCormack Lawyers), lived in Wadeye for fourteen years and is an interpreter of Indigenous language. Peter Shepherd (Business and Community Development Pty. Ltd.), has consulted extensively as an Independent Advisor guiding the project management and

design, and draws on twenty two years experience in business and community development in Indigenous communities. Our accountant Michelle Coats is based in Kununurra and has lived in Numbulwar and Ngukurr.

Two major projects made possible by the funding will occur at Jilamara Arts and Craft, Melville Island and Buku Larrnggay Mulka, Yirrkala, for upgrades to the the Art Centres and for staff housing and will be self-managed by the Art Centres. The projects are a new way of ANKAAA supporting Art Centres and we are privileged to do so with the support of a committed and expert group of individuals in our Project Management Team.

The first phase of equipment and small project delivery will be completed by the end of 2009. Building works will be undertaken over the coming two years. ANKAAA has also secured ABA funding to employ a Development Officer starting February 2009, to assist Art Centres with further applications for infrastructure support.

See www.ankaaa.org.au for further information on the project team.

Below: Independent Project Advisor, Peter Shepherd, working with the ANKAAA Board of Directors decision making on the NT Arts Infrastructure project. Photo: ANKAAA.



Sharing the Knowledge

By Christopher Durkin, Kalumburu Arts Project

In September Ruth Nalmakarra and Emma Gundurrupuy from Milingimbi Arts and Culture in Arnhem Land came to Kalumburu in the North Kimberley. Some of the people in Kalumburu had asked for them to come and teach them to weave with pandanus.

Before they arrived, some of the people went out and collected boob roots, smashed them up and started to make string so they could practice. This was part of a weekly art class some of the Kalumburu Arts Project artists do with the senior school kids.

When Ruth and Emma arrived in

Kalumburu they set out to harvest pandanus and plants to make dyes. The pandanus was easy to find, but the roots for dyes were more difficult. Every day the ladies worked with about twelve senior students who learned how to collect the pandanus, the dyes, how to prepare them and then to start weaving a basket.

It was a fantastic experience for everyone to learn from each other and to meet people from different places. The artists from Kalumburu had a few tears in their eyes when they had to say goodbye.



Top: Emma Gundurrupuy (Trainer), preparing dyes.

Above: L-R Chris Durkin, Emma Gundurrupuy (trainer), Letesha, Douglas, Cameron, Ruth Nalmakarra (trainer), Talina, Anna. Images courtesy Kalumburu Arts Project, Western Australia. Thanks to ANKAAA for funding the project.

The Motika Project

By Warlayirti Artists

Over the last few months Warlayirti Artists in Balgo has received funding from the Community Road Safety Program (WA Local Government Association) and the Department of the Attorney General through the Proceeds of Crime Grant program for the Motika Project.

The Motika Project is an arts-based project produced by Warlayirti Artists with the communities of Balgo, Mulan and Billiluna. This three year project draws on community members' lived experiences of the 'motika' (motor car) as a 'vehicle' to explore a range of social, cultural, economic and justice-based issues experienced by Indigenous Australians living in remote communities. The project will take the form of workshops and exhibitions in photography, advertising and painting and ultimately a new film work about this all-important part of contemporary Indigenous culture.

The first stages of the project commenced in September with film and photography artists Gaby Mason and Lotte Waters engaging the community agencies in Balgo and Mulan to develop a team of photographers and camera operators from the two communities. The group created two short road safety ads and a poster campaign for exposure in local Indigenous media. The next stage of the project sees a range of young men engaged in a series of painting and photography projects.

For more information on the Motika Project contact Warlayirti Artists on (08) 9168 8960 or e-mail admin@balgoart.org.au.



Above: Motika Project promotional image
Photo: Warlayirti Artists.

'A Wonderful Comparative Perspective on Landscape' Mangkaja Artist Residency: 2007 - 2009 By Katie McGuire, Mangkaja Arts

Sometimes opportunity appears quietly like a wildflower seedling pushing through the soil between clumps of Spinifex. Projects which are encouraged to blossom naturally are bound for success! When renowned artist Mandy Martin walked into the Mangkaja Arts humble gallery at Fitzroy Crossing in 2007, no one suspected the birth of an extraordinary three-year collaborative project. Martin camped at Fossil Downs (Imanara country) with Janangoo Butcher Cherele and, encouraged by Mandy McGuire (then manager), took the old man on his final journey to country to spend the day painting.

In 2008 Mandy Martin and master printmaker Basil Hall returned to the valley to work on a print folio inspired by the paintings at Fossil Downs the

year before. Three generations of artists of the Cherele family joined Mandy on a journey back to paint at Painted Rock (Imanara country). It was Katrina's and Rohanna's (pictured) first visit.

With the support of the Department of Culture and the Arts, Mandy Martin returned to Mangkaja Arts in 2009 to extend the project working at four communities with fifteen artists. The artists painted country together in situ and later produced a folio of exquisite etchings based on the original paintings.

The Painting Country project and printmaking workshop culminated in two high profile exhibitions for Mangkaja artists. The Imanara print folio was shown in *Etched in the Sun* at Rebecca Hossack Gallery, London, in May this year and paintings and prints will

be exhibited at Australian Galleries, Melbourne, in late 2009. Not only has the experience been enriching for all involved, 'the project has provided a wonderful comparative perspective on landscape' (Howard Morphy, 2009).



Katrina, Rohanna and Isaac Cherele at painted rock Imanara Country, 2008. Image courtesy Mangkaja Arts, Western Australia.

Life in the Kimberley with Lisa and Aquinas By Jeremy Smith

In October 2009 a fantastic body of work by Fitzroy Crossing artists Lisa Uhl and Aquinas Crowe was showcased at Mangkaja Arts. For one week, *Life in the Kimberley with Lisa and Aquinas* transformed the Mangkaja Art Centre art studio into a gallery space – twenty of Lisa's paintings on canvas and paper were exhibited, as were three of Aquinas' films. The works tell the unique and touching tales of these two incredible young disabled Aboriginal artists.

Mangkaja Arts and Disability in the Arts, Disadvantage in the Arts, Australia (DADAA) partnered with the artists and secured a grant from the Department of Culture and the Arts (in partnership with the Disability Services Commission). Having spent over three

years developing their artistic skills in workshops in Fitzroy Crossing, the pair were keen to take their practice to the next level. With a groundswell of community support behind them, Lisa and Aquinas proudly unveiled their work to a crowd of nearly 200 people. Aquinas introduced each of his films to the audience and explained the inspiration behind his films, while Lisa proudly showed her paintings.

The event included singing and dancing and Mungarri cooked in the ground. The event also provided an ideal opportunity to premiere the Mangkaja Artist Biography Films *Rough Copy*.

Lisa and Aquinas will travel to Perth to attend the opening of their exhibition at DADAA's Freight Gallery on Friday

6 November, and in June 2010 when the exhibition will open at the Moores Building Contemporary Art Gallery in Fremantle.



Lisa Uhl and Aquinas Crowe at Mangkaja Studio
Photo: Mangkaja Arts.

Footprints on Blue Mud Bay

By Angus Cameron, Nomad Art Darwin

Baniyala is the home of the Yithuwa Madarrpa people at Blue Mud Bay in Eastern Arnhem Land. In October 2009 Nomad Art Productions invited a group of artists from around Australia to take part in a cross-cultural exchange at a traditional campsite recently constructed at the community.

Yolngu artists Djambawa Marawili, Marrerra Marawili, Liyawaday Marawili, Marrnyula Munungurr and Mulkun Wirrpanda participated in the printmaking workshop with printmaker Basil Hall. They worked alongside visiting artists Fiona Hall, John Wolseley, Jorg Schmeisser and Judy Watson and were accompanied by ethno-biologist Glenn Wightman, anthropologist Howard Morphy and photographer Peter Eve. Together they camped, cooked, walked the country, shared stories and made art.

The artists made trips to country visiting ancestral sites and sharing traditional

and scientific knowledge. At night the group watched archival films depicting Yolngu culture and looked at images of each other's work. Around the campfire they discussed culture, history, sea rights and events. In response, each artist depicted the experience in their own way; thinking, observing, photographing and drawing one of the most pristine and culturally significant places in Australia.

Printmaker Basil Hall set up a temporary printmaking studio and images were translated onto zinc plates. The project will culminate in a selection of limited edition etchings which will be launched at the 2010 Darwin Festival. Our thanks to the Sidney Myer Foundation, NT Research and Innovation Board, Arts NT, Australia Council for the Arts, Buku Larrnggay Mulka, Basil Hall Editions, the ANU Research School of Humanities, NRETAS and the wonderful generosity and hospitality of Djambawa Marawili and the Baniyala Community.



Japanese Woodblocking and Etching Workshop

By Chris Meizis, Munupi Arts and Crafts

Printmakers Jacqueline Gribbin and Paul Kovesi from Northern Editions recently lead a five-day workshop at Munupi Arts and Crafts on Melville Island, supported by funding from ANKAAA. They worked together with Tiwi artists in the making of woodblock prints – an old style of Japanese printmaking.

The artists found it challenging in the beginning, but excitement grew as they began to understand the woodblocking process. After cutting fingers whilst etching designs came the fun part - choosing colours and spreading paint. The designs came alive, resulting in bold and intricate patterns in vibrant colours and pale pastels. Seeing their finished pieces was the highlight for all involved, with the women admiring each other's new work.



Top Right: Donna Burak learning Japanese woodblock printing techniques from printmaker Jacqueline Gribbin. Photo: ANKAAA.

Left Top: Under the knowledge tree at Baniyala listening to Djambawa Marawili. Photo: Peter Eve.

Left Bottom: Welcoming Bunggal and smoking ceremony at Baniyala Community. Photo: Peter Eve.

Middle Bottom: Artists and scientists with Laynhapuy Rangers on the flood plains at Blue Mud Bay. Photo: Peter Eve.

Following in their footsteps

By Pedro Wonaeamirri (in conversation with Barry Hayes, Jilamara Arts and Craft)

In September I went to Sydney to do some public talks for the Art Gallery of New South Wales about the Pukumani poles, tutini, in their collection. The poles were collected by Dr Stuart Scougall and Tony Tuckson. They were made in Milikapiti, Melville Island and were taken down to Sydney for exhibition at the Gallery. It was the 50th anniversary of their arrival and they were being moved from the bottom level of the gallery to the 'Grand Court' for permanent display.

I worked with Jonathon Jones, a Curator from the Gallery, talking to hundreds of people over three days about the poles, how they were made and used in the past and today and how they relate to Tiwi death and to the spirit of Tiwi people. The pukumani pole for us Tiwi is like a monument, or headstone.

Six months or a year after a person dies, the in-laws of the deceased are commissioned by the family to carve the poles to be placed around the burial site.

Fifty years ago when these poles were carved, the old people were very strong. They had their own style of carving and painting. Today, myself and other artists carve pukumani poles for ceremony and for exhibition.

It is important that the Art Gallery of New South Wales keep these poles so that the next generation of my people



can go to Sydney to see them and other people can see how important they are to us Tiwi.

Pedro Wonaeamirri (and curator Johnathan Jones) speaking at the Art Gallery of New South Wales. Photo: Johan Palsson, Art Gallery of New South Wales.

Dictionary of Australian Artists Online

By Vivien Johnson



Dictionary of
Australian Artists
Online.

The Dictionary of Australian Artists Online (DAAO) is a free national resource which aims to include accurate biographies of all Australian artists, Indigenous and non-Indigenous. That is an enormous task, which will take a long time to complete, but already the DAAO contains over eight thousand entries. Many of these are Indigenous artists from deserts and cities, but the biographies of Aboriginal artists from the Top End and the Kimberley are one

of the big missing parts of the picture of Australian art we are trying to build with the DAAO.

So in the last week of September, DAAO Editor-in-Chief Vivien Johnson from the University of NSW accompanied ANKAAA CEO Christina Davidson on a road trip that took us from Darwin across Arnhem Land. We visited Injalak Arts and Crafts at Gunbalanya, Maningrida Arts and Culture, Bula'bula Arts at Ramingining, Buku Larrnggay Mulka at Yirrkala and Gapuwiyak Culture and Arts. Vivien met with managers and artists and explained and demonstrated the DAAO. Several Art Centres joined up to the DAAO on the spot. They can now contribute their artists' biographies to the DAAO themselves and then keep adding information to their entries as artists win

awards, have exhibitions, travel for art business and so on. Several managers were keen to have post-graduate students from the University come to work with artists to write biographies for the DAAO.

If you are interested in taking part in this project, check out the DAAO at www.daa0.org.au or email the DAAO Editor on daa0@unsw.edu.au.



Dorothy Djukulul and Professor Vivien Johnson, Bula'bula Arts, Ramingining. Photo: ANKAAA.



Elcho Island elder and artist, Richard Gandhuwuy found time at this year's Garma festival to talk art and the homelands movement with Federal Minister for the Arts, Peter Garrett. Photo: Dion Teasdale.



Freddie Timms, Chris Durkin and Bonnie Deakon. Photo: ANKAAA.



Tiwi Region members and ANKAAA staff at Tiwi Regional Meeting. Photo: ANKAAA.



Kevin Rudd, Colin Barnett, Carol Hapke & Button Jones at the East Kimberley Ord Expansion Project. During the event Kevin Rudd announced support to Waringarri Aboriginal Arts for infrastructure funding supporting art centre upgrades and staff housing for Kalumburu Community. Photo: Nathan Dyer.



Djambawa Marawili singing, Anna Schwartz in background, at Moscow Biennale this year. Image courtesy Buku Larnggay Mulka, Northern Territory.



Patrick Mung Mung and Betty Carrington at the opening of Kimberley Aboriginal Artists exhibition, *Sharing Difference On Common Ground*, at Holmes a Court Gallery, Perth, in October. Photo: Tim Acker, Kimberley Aboriginal Artists.



At the Stone Country Festival 2009, Injalak Arts. Photo: ANKAAA.



At the Kimberley Regional Meeting, Warmun Art Centre, November 2009. Photo: ANKAAA.

Wesfarmers Fellowship Consultation Workshops

The Australian National Gallery, in partnership with Wesfarmers, is planning an innovative and exciting new Fellowship Program to support professional development of Indigenous Arts Workers. The program, commencing in 2010, will equip Indigenous people to work in roles such as curating, marketing, management, art handling, registration, publishing and fundraising.



L-R Rosie Goodjie, Nada Rawlins and Daisy Andrews at the Wesfarmers Fellowship Consultation Workshop in Broome.

Photo: ANKAAA.



At the Wesfarmers Fellowship Consultation in Darwin. Photo: ANKAAA.

Wide national consultation has taken place to help develop the Fellowship Program and in September and October ANKAAA was very pleased to partner with the Fellowship consultancy firm Cox Inall Ridgeway to support consultation workshops in Darwin and Broome.



Aden Ridgeway and Nada Rawlins at the Wesfarmers Fellowship Consultation Workshop in Broome in October. Photo: ANKAAA.

In June this year Warlayirti Artists lost one of its most respected and prolific artists, Boxer Milner Tjampitjin. Milgna Milgna was an old man who was his country: Purkitji and Kandimalal – Sturt Creek and Wolf Creek Crater. One of the most innovative colourists in Australian art, his career spanned over 18 years.

Boxer was a senior law man and custodian of the country Tjukurrpa (Dreaming) stories and songs of the Sturt Creek, Purkitji. A highly inventive artist, he meticulously rendered intricate patterns. His signature motif was a geometric grid that depicted the phenomenon of 'milk water' that runs after the rain has fallen in the clay soils upstream of Billiluna. These patterns, in their strength and variations, depicted the drama of the weather and transformation of the land by the waterways.

He once commented about his work, 'I like my paintings because I paint the dreaming of my country. Sturt Creek brings back memories of my old people and tribe and my country. I like working to earn my own money... painting keeps me busy.'¹

Boxer had solo exhibitions in 2000, 2003 and 2005 and has shown overseas. He is represented in major Australian and international public and private collections including the National Gallery of Australia, Art Gallery of South Australia, National Gallery of Victoria, Kerry Stokes Collection, Laverty Collection, Artbank, Berndt Museum of Anthropology, University of Western Australia, Kluge Ruhe Collection, USA and Helen Read Collection. The exhibition *Balgo: Contemporary Australian Art from the Balgo Hills*, from the Artbank collection and including Boxer Milner's work, is presently touring internationally.

It is thanks to Boxer Milner that the stories and songs of his country and the 'milk water' continue to run.

¹ Balgo 4-04, *New paintings from the Kutjungka Region*, Warlayirti Aboriginal Corporation 2004 p.40

One of the Northern Territory's most distinguished and respected Indigenous leaders has passed away aged 83 on his country at the remote West Arnhem Land Outstation of Kabulwarnamyo. Wamud Namok was made an Officer in the Order of Australia for his services to the arts and Indigenous land management in 2004.

Born on the Arnhem Land Plateau in 1926 Wamud Namok spent much of his life travelling across the traditional walking tracks of Western and Southern Arnhem Land hunting, participating in ceremonies, trading traditional commodities and maintaining his extended kin networks. As a youth he worked in the tin mining industry and gave otherwise unrecognised service in the Katherine region with the military during the Second World War. His extensive travel has been the basis for his exceptional knowledge about places, their land ownership status, their physical peculiarities, available resources and religious significance as well as their history passed on by previous generations.

In his senior years Wamud Namok worked as a consultant to anthropologists, art historians, botanists and a diverse group of other

researchers from both the social and natural sciences. He was also a regular speaker at regional land management conferences. He has been extremely generous with his knowledge taking on an important role as teacher to both non-Aboriginal people and younger generations of Aboriginal kin.

Wamud Namok has been one of the region's most important and loved artists. His works are held by most major state cultural institutions in Australia and overseas. He is also known as the last Aboriginal artist to have painted works on the walls of rock shelters in western Arnhem Land. His knowledge of the contemporary significance of rock art in the region was unparalleled and represents a link with the past and a particular way of life which has now changed forever.

In late September this year he saw the rock country lands of the West Arnhem Plateau declared as an Indigenous Protected Area at a ceremony attended by the Environment Minister Peter Garrett and other dignitaries. The declaration was a great step towards his vision of bringing his people back to care for their traditional lands.

Left: © Wamud Namok, *Kunj and Wak Wak* Right: : © Wamud Namok, *WakeWaken - Ankunij Djang (Sugarbag dreaming)* Photos: Injalak Arts.



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