Barkly Regional Arts - Warumungu Language Repatriation Project

Language recordings are a source of inspiration to Barkly artists. At a recent workshop at Barkly Regional Arts in Tennant Creek, artists created works in response to the repatriation of historic Warumungu language recordings. Recorded in 1976, many of the artists, they tell gruesome and dramatic creation stories, oral histories detailing first-contact with Europeans, life on cattle stations, and a rich documentation of traditional practices.

Artists Susannah Nelson and Lindy Brodie will share the stage with linguists Samantha Disbray, Sandra Morrison and Rosemary Plummer from the Australian National University. Together, they will discuss the ongoing repatriation of the recordings, and the creation of an accompanying book and multimedia exhibition, showcasing artwork, transcriptions, translations and sound recordings — works which testify to the rich and enduring culture, history, language and creativity of Warumungu people.

Desert Art Worker Program: Meeting Us Half-Way

Our approach is always that Aboriginal art workers should want to participate in our program activities as much as (or more than) we want it for them. What happens when Aboriginal art workers self-identify as being ready, when there are high expectations, and they are challenged with exciting professional opportunities?

Desert Art Photography Prize 2019

The Desert Photography Prize, now in its seventh year, provides an important platform where the Aboriginal photographer is behind the lens rather than being the observed. The Prize emerged out of the broader Aboriginal Art Worker program that delivers opportunity for the development of technical skills and experimentation with new media. Participating photographers provide us with an intimate insight into their community lives captured with a sense of comfort and familiarity that may only be conveyed by one who belongs. The 2019 Prize will be judged by esteemed visual artist, curator, writer and academic Brenda L. Croft.
Conway Ginger and The Fly

Screening for the first time, the drawings of Bindi Mwerre Anthurre artist Conway Ginger come to life through the animation of local high school student Rory Roschild. Conway’s quirky, humorous drawings explore the relationships and interactions of the Northern Territory life, with this production capturing a day in the life of a character we are well acquainted with here in the Central Desert – the fly. The animation will be screened alongside a making-of by David Nixon, revealing the techniques behind the animation, and delving deeper into the art and life of Conway Ginger and fellow Bindi Mwerre Anthurre artists.

Art centres are important community places. They are innovative and vibrant creative spaces where culture is kept strong, passed on between old and young, and places where Aboriginal people can share their arts and culture with the world. Desert mob member art centres are Aboriginal-owned and controlled. They are professionally managed to ensure ethical support for the production, marketing and distribution of authentic Aboriginal art. When an artwork is sold from an art centre, most of the funds go to the artist and a small portion is invested back into the art centre for operational costs and community programs. Art centres are a vital part of community life in remote Central Australia. As well as providing much-needed income and employment opportunities they support the maintenance of culture in communities by providing a focus for family connection, social and cultural activities and the means to celebrate Aboriginal identity. Art centres are the only sustainable and ethical model with serious government reporting requirements and financial transparencies.

Purchasing and sourcing art from a Desert mob member art centre provides a guarantee that your artwork is authentic and ethical. Buying artwork from Aboriginal-owned art centres means you are supporting families, jobs, community and the next generation of Aboriginal artists.