

Art, words and photos from
Central Australian Aboriginal Art Centres

Quarterly edition, Autumn 2021

THE DESART RADAR



Culture First.

Supporting Aboriginal Art Centres
of Central Australia



Image: Young women of Yarrenyty Arltere; Nina Charles, Shamia Petrick, Elizabeth Bundy, Helen Ebatarinja, Shenita Petrick. Photo: Oliver Eclipse Photography, Desart.

The Annual Desart Art Centre Conference

After a hiatus in 2020, the Desart Art Centre Conference was back in 2021, presented both in person and online. This year's program responded to the impacts of COVID-19 on sales and production and art centres' subsequent exponential engagement with the digital domain. A complementary artistic program was also introduced including various artist workshops and a fashion parade.

The conference provided lots of valuable information exchanges and sharing of strong cultural work. It was also an opportunity for art centres to connect with each other and with Desart staff, guest speakers, and staff of government agencies and industry support organisations. For the first time, the conference was also streamed live online giving people back home in the art centres a chance to attend and share, while reiterating the ongoing discussions of digital agility for art centres as we look forward.

Thank you to everyone for coming, sharing and connecting; artists, art centres, industry, partners, presenters and supporters!

Vincent Lingiari Art Award Ngawa, Ngapa, Kapi, Kwatja, Water

Together with the Central Land Council, Desart established the Vincent Lingiari Art Award in 2016 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the historic Wave Hill Walk Off and the 40th anniversary of the Aboriginal Land Rights Act (NT) 1976.

The award honours the leadership of Vincent Lingiari and all those who have fought for their land rights.

The Aboriginal land rights and contemporary Aboriginal art movements share the same roots. They evolved at the same time in the Northern Territory and drew strength from the same sources. Both have significantly contributed to Australia's modern national identity.

This year's award asks Aboriginal artists to reflect on their individual and collective battles for water rights and share their creative responses to the theme Ngawa, Ngapa, Kapi, Kwatja, Water with a broad audience.

The exhibition runs from September 8 - October 13 at Tangentyere Artists.



Image: Winner of the 2019 VLAA Eunice Napanangka Jack, in front of her work *Kuruyultu*, 2019, acrylic on Belgian linen, 101.5 x 122cm. Photo: James Henry, Desart.

“Inhaling, exhaling your thoughts of everyday life that you’re going through, trying not to think about tomorrow, try to think today about what you’re doing, it’s about that breathing.”

Joseph Williams, Tennant Creek Brio member



Brio – Are you looking at me?

The Tennant Creek Brio

1 – 17 April

RAFT Artspace

Images: (main) Installation shot of exhibition at RAFT Artspace. Photo: Dallas Gold (left) Simon Wilson, Fabian Brown and Clifford Thompson, of The Tennant Creek Brio. Photo: Levi McLean.



Image: Athena Granites of Warlukurlangu Artists at work. Photo courtesy of the artist and art centre.

Desart Resilience Project

The Desart Resilience Project is rolling out across the Territory with several projects being funded. Developed in partnership with the Central Land Council (CLC), the program aims to provide practical and sustained support for NT based members following the impacts of COVID-19.

Art centres have identified numerous arts focused projects brimming with innovation and creativity. The projects include trying new mediums like screen printing and animation to build skills, product, innovation, and explore new directions for their art centres. Some men’s programs have also been developed around building a portfolio of work, new pathways for income and responding to tourism opportunities.

Another component of this funding is to assist with minor infrastructure upgrades to ensure the health and wellbeing of artists working in art centres and to improve studio environments and facilities to create a more workable space and maximise art centre productivity.

A third component is around upgrades to improve digital connectivity and agility through new IT services and equipment. The majority of these funds have been allocated to upgrading and replacing equipment to provide better access to technology for artists and art workers.

We are looking forward to seeing these projects roll out to ensure strong futures for Aboriginal artists and art workers and their enterprises.



Iltja Ntjarra's latest public art project

In a new public art and professional development project, Iltja Ntjarra have been applying their renowned mural skills to creating laser cut steel murals.

Mervyn Rubuntja, Hubert Pareroutja, Selma Coulthard, Kathy Inkamala, Noreen Hudson and Kathleen France, and Vanessa Inkamala have all been working with the new medium. The artists have been involved throughout the whole process, both technical and creative including laser cutting, design work and steel paint work.

Each artist decided on a theme for the murals that responded to an idea of place, in line with the Hermansburg School landscape tradition.

Stay tuned for the location of these works as they will be exhibited in the coming months!

This project has been created in partnership with Judith Lovell, Senior Research Fellow at CDU and supported by Plazart and the Department of Industry, Tourism and Trade.



10 years of the Desert Photography Prize!

All artists and art workers within the Desert membership are invited to send in their work.

Works will be exhibited in the Desert Artspace, opening on Thursday, 9 September.

The winning entry will receive \$500 in prize money.

Entries close Friday, 9 July.

“An intimate insight into community lives captured with a sense of comfort and familiarity that may only be conveyed by one who belongs.”

Image: *Local Warming* by Manjal Jampijinpa / Liam Alberts of Warlukurlangu Artists, winner of the 2020 Desert Photography Prize. Image courtesy the artist and art centre.



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www.instagram.com/desartinc/

Key dates

- 30 June** Vincent Lingiari Art Award entries close
- 4–11 July** National NAIDOC WEEK
- 9 July** Desert Photography Prize entries close
- 6–8 August** Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair

Email blasts for Desart members

Keep up to date with industry news, grants, art prizes and competition opportunities. Email programofficer@desart.com.au if you're missing out on our grant and competition email blasts.

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