

Art, words and photos from  
Central Australian Aboriginal art centres

Quarterly edition, December 2019

# THE DESART RADAR



**Culture First.**

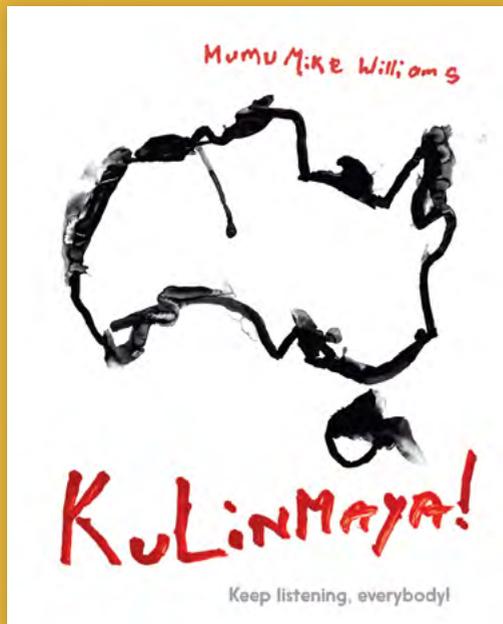
Supporting Aboriginal Art Centres  
of Central Australia

# ***Kulinmaya! Keep listening, everyone!*** **A book by Kunmanara Williams** **(Mimili Maku Arts)**

*“I want my book to be in schools and read by politicians and young people everywhere, so that they can learn about Tjukurpa Law, and realise how crucially important Tjukurpa is to Anangu Aboriginal people. Our Tjukurpa Law is all-encompassing. It was always intended to be eternal, but we know it is at risk. This is why I am documenting it now. I want to raise people’s consciousness. I want us to be acknowledged by the wider society and the government. I am hoping to start a movement of new awareness.”*

(Kunmanara Williams, 2018)

Kulinmaya! is the story of Mr Williams’ life, beliefs and artistic journey, as he told it, in Pitjantjatjara and English. Mr Williams (1952-2019) was one of the founders and directors of Mimili Maku Arts, best known for his iconic paintings incorporating scrawling writing on Australia Post mailbags, suspended from kulata (spears).



The book has become a thorough insight into the life of a cultural leader, combining contemporary and historical photographs with a range of Mr Williams’ artworks, and allowing readers to engage more deeply with the meanings and stories behind his artwork, in particular as it relates to the long struggle for land rights on the APY Lands.

Image courtesy of the artist and Mimili Maku Arts 2019

L-R: Dianne Ungukalpi Golding, Judith Yinyika Chambers, Cynthia Burke and Joyce James (Image courtesy of Koskela)



## Tjanpi Desert Weavers collaboration with Koskela

This year, Tjanpi Desert Weavers undertook a collaborative project with Sydney-based design company, Koskela, creating a unique lighting design range, the *Wirra Walykumunu / Piti Wiru* (beautiful bowl) collection. The shape of the curved lampshades took inspiration from the *wirra* and *piti*, wooden carrying vessels used by women in the early days (pre colonisation) for a variety of purposes. Tjanpi artists involved in the project include Cynthia Burke, Dianne Ungukalpi Golding, Joyce James, Judith Yinyika Chambers, Julie Anderson, Margaret Heffernan, Margaret Smith, Nancy Nanana Jackson and Tjunkaya Tapaya. Their work reflects an innovative fibre art practice that is both contemporary and imbued with tradition and meaning.



Image: Dianne Ungukalpi Golding from Warakurna (WA) 2019 (Image by Rhett Hammerton © Tjanpi Desert Weavers NPY Womens Council)



## **Strong Business Program 3-day Art Management professional development event**

In mid-November the Strong Business Program delivered a 3-day Art Management training event for Art Centre Managers, Coordinators and Studio facilitators at the Desart office in Alice Springs.

Attendees participated in a range of business, frontline management and legal skill sessions, designed specifically to extend the managers and benefit the art centre where they work. Each session was led by industry experts in a collaborative and relaxed learning environment. Congratulations to all the participants who attended and made this such a successful event.

Image: Managers and coordinators from the Desart member Art Centres participating in Arts Management training at Desart in Alice Springs (Image courtesy of Desart 2019)

## Papunya Tjupi opening Men's space

Papunya men are the forefathers of the western desert dot painting movement that began in the 1970s but when the Papunya Tula collective left Papunya community and followed the artists back to their homelands many of the men who remained in the Papunya lost support to paint. The women incorporated Papunya Tjupi in 2007 and although the men watched the women flourish as artists, the centre had limited capacity to support male members of the community interested in a career in arts. The opening of the men's painting space in October this year is the first place for them to paint in over 15 years. Also in October the artists had Glenn Iseger-Pilkington from Desart's curatorial program help them curate their first exhibition *Tjupi Puli* (Honey Ant Mountain). Since opening, the men's painting room is attracting young and senior artists.

The men can be seen sharing stories of their Papunya history, family and country. There is a deep sense of pride in the community as they remember the past but celebrate the future and the opportunities before them.

Papunya Tjupi and Desart Director Isobel Gorey warmly said in her welcoming speech *'This is a special time because we remember our Tjamu (Grandfathers) painting in the old days. We are celebrating because now it is happening again'*.



Image: Keanu Nelson reflecting happily on his work in progress (Image courtesy of Papunya Tjupi Arts 2019)



Aranji, Acrylic on canvas, Lindy Brodie, 2018 (image courtesy of the artists, Tartukula Artists and Barkly Regional Arts 2019)

## ***Ankkinyi Apparr, Ankkinyi Mangurr Our Language, Our designs***

After retrieving archival recordings of Warumungu speakers, seven artists from Barkly Regional Arts in Tennant Creek (NT) were inspired to remember their old people, old stories and old knowledge. The paintings created range from ancestral stories to depictions of traditional healing, the arrival of whitefellas and station life. The historic audio recordings play alongside the paintings and contemporary videos in this multi-modal exhibition that evokes the sounds and colours of Warumungu Country.

*Ankkinyi Apparr, Ankkinyi Mangurr Our Language, Our designs* is on at The State Library of South Australia until the 20th January 2020. Curated by Sandra Morrison Nangali, Rosemary Plummer Narrurlu, and Ronald Morrison Jungarrayi the exhibition brings together stories, language and artworks from Tartukula Artists featuring Susannah Nelson, Heather Anderson, Lindy Brodie, Joseph Williams, Gladys Anderson, Penny Williams, Ruth Dawson.

## Warlukurlangu Artists collaboration with Camilla

Warlukurlangu Artists has entered into another successful collaboration this time with high fashion brand Camilla to present the WARLU X Camilla collection. This collection features distinct Aboriginal dot work that is universally unique and identifiable as 'Australian Aboriginal Art'.

The collaborating artists from Warlukurlangu Artists include; Julie Nangala Robertson, Murdie Nampijinpa Morris, Lynette Nangala Singleton, Selina Napanagnka Fisher, Lawrence Jangala Watson and Jerusha Nungarrayi Morris.

Image (LR): Patrick Stevens, Otto Sims, Camilla Frank, Cecilia Alfonso, Julie Nangala Robertson and her sister Sabrina Nangala Robertson (Image courtesy Warlukurlangu Artists)





## Key Dates

- 23 Dec – 17 Jan** Desart office closed
- 1-3 April** SAM Training, Revealed, WA
- 7-8 April** Desart Art Centre Conference – DoubleTree by Hilton, Alice Springs

## Email blasts for Desart members

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

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