

VINCENT LINGIARI ART AWARD
OUR LAND OUR LIFE OUR FUTURE

OUR LAND, OUR LIFE, OUR FUTURE

The Our Land, Our Life, Our Future Exhibition and the accompanying Vincent Lingiari Art Award commemorate the 50th anniversary of the historic Wave Hill Walk Off and 40 years since the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act (NT) 1976* was enacted by the Australian Parliament.

On the 23 August 1966, Vincent Lingiari, Gurindji leader and head stockman at Wave Hill Station led workers and their families to walk off the cattle station in protest against unjust working and living conditions. The stockmen and their families relocated to Wattie Creek in a strike that was to last nine years. The walk off and strike became much more than a call for equal rights; it soon became a fight for the return of Gurindji lands. The walk off attracted national and international attention to the atrocious treatment of Aboriginal peoples and their campaign for land rights.

After persistent struggle, lobbying and negotiation, the Gurindji secured a lease over a small portion of their traditional lands for residential and cultural purposes. In 1975, Prime Minister Gough Whitlam poured red dirt into the hands of Vincent Lingiari to symbolise the return of what has always been, always will be, Aboriginal land.

One year later, the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act (NT) 1976* returned Aboriginal reserves and mission land in the Northern Territory to traditional land owners. It established the Central and Northern Land Councils, as well as a process through which their members could secure Aboriginal Freehold Title to their traditional land. Today Aboriginal people own almost half of the land in the Northern Territory.

The Vincent Lingiari Award and *Our Land, Our Life, Our Future* honours the leadership, courage and strength of Vincent Lingiari and all those who have fought for their land rights.



Prime Minister Gough Whitlam pours the soil of Gurindji home country into Vincent Lingiari's hand, symbolising the return of the land to Aboriginal control, Daguragu NT, 16 August 1975. Photo: Robert Wesley-Smith

Land Rights 1976 - 2016



1975

Charlie Perkins and Wenten Rubuntja elected CLC's first chair and deputy chair.

1978

The Warlpiri Kartangarurru-Gurindji claim becomes the CLC's first successful land claim.



1985

Uluru Kata Tjuta is handed back to traditional owners who lease the area back to the federal government for 99 years.

Patrick Dodson becomes the CLC's first director.



2005

The Warlpiri Education and Training Trust and the Uluru Rent Money projects kick off the CLC's community development program.

Since then, the program has helped Aboriginal groups to drive their own development by investing \$58 million of their royalty, compensation and rent income in many hundreds of community projects.



1976

The Australian parliament passes the Aboriginal Land Rights Act and the CLC publishes the first issue of Land Rights News.



1983

Aboriginal custodians protest against a dam that would have flooded sacred sites north of Alice Springs.



2004

The CLC negotiates the joint management of 20 national parks leased back to the NT government.

Since 2012 members have invested all rent income from the park leases in community development projects.

2000

Lajamanu's Wulajin Rangers (now North Tanami Rangers) become the CLC's first ranger group.

Today the CLC's ranger program supports 10 ranger groups managing more than 300,000 square km of Indigenous Protected Area and other Aboriginal land.



2015

The CLC marks its 40th birthday with the launch of the oral history collection *Every Hill Got A Story*.

It celebrates winning back more than 417,000 square km of Aboriginal freehold land.



2016

A joint meeting of Territory land councils at Kalkaringi celebrates 40 years of Land Rights and half a century since the Wave Hill Walk Off.

1988

Wenten Rubuntja (CLC) and Galarwuy Yunupingu (NLC) present Prime Minister Bob Hawke with the Barunga Statement calling for a treaty. Mr Hawke promises a treaty by 1990.

A convoy of NT Aboriginal leaders drives to Sydney to protest against the Bicentennial celebrations.



1993

The Australian parliament passes the Native Title Act.

One year later, the CLC becomes a Native Title Representative Body.

1997

The sunset clause in the Aboriginal Land Rights Act takes effect.

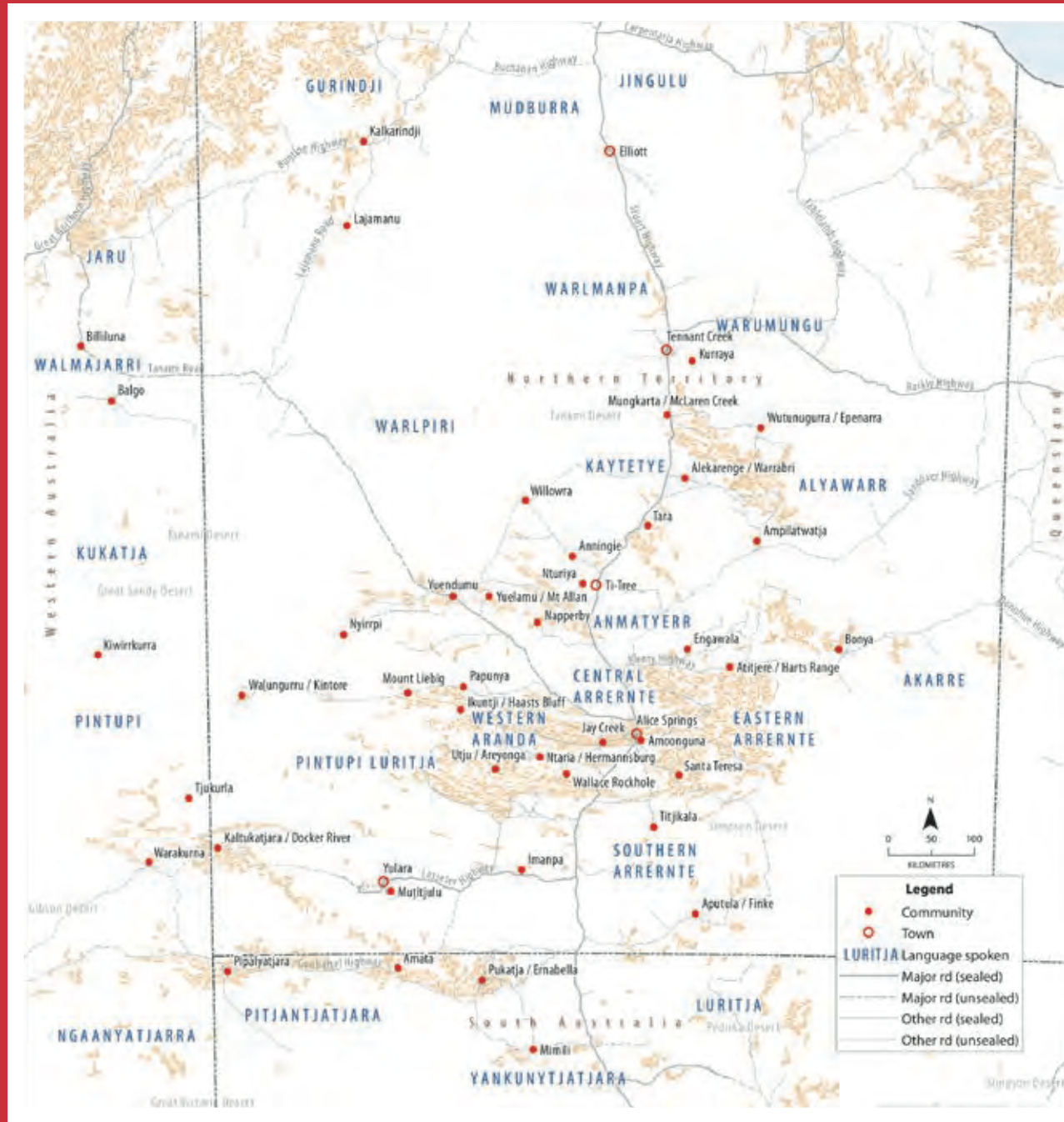
No more new land claims can be lodged.

2008

Traditional owners commemorate the 80th anniversary of the Coniston Massacre.



OUR LANGUAGES



THE POWER OF OUR ART REFLECTS THE POWER OF OUR LAND RIGHTS

The power of our art has always been critical to the power of our land rights.

In the history of land rights, the Yirrkala bark painting petitions to Federal Parliament in 1963 go down as potent catalysts along with the Wave Hill Walk Off in 1966 and the Gove traditional owners' case against bauxite miner Nabalco culminating in 1971. The Woodward Royal Commission into NT land rights soon followed in 1973/74, before the *Aboriginal Land Rights (NT) Act* finally passed in 1976.

Painting from the Top End and Centre of course completed the Barunga Statement two land council chairmen, Wenten Rubuntja and Galarrwuy Yunupingu, presented to Prime Minister Bob Hawke in 1988, calling for a treaty and nationwide land rights.

And I was there when Mr Rubuntja presented a marvellous, and no doubt influential, Yeperenye Dreaming painting to Prime Minister Paul Keating in talks on the High Court's Mabo decision that led to the *Native Title Act* in 1993. I have a photo of the former CLC chairman explaining the painting to Keating, me holding it up and the PM gazing at it, deep in thought, hands clasped in front of his trademark fine Italian suit.

So it is appropriate that we mark 50 years since the Wave Hill Walk Off led by Vincent Lingiari, and 40 years of land rights in the Northern Territory, with the

Vincent Lingiari Art Award. The award is held in collaboration with Desart, the peak body doing a great job supporting Central Australian Aboriginal art centres. It is appropriate the award judges include Hetti Perkins, the daughter of the CLC's first chairman, for her strong expertise in the arts.

As song and dance, body designs, painting on the ground and on canvas, art has been included as evidence in successful land claims and native title claims.

Aboriginal Land Commissioner Toohey referred to such evidence in his report on the successful Anmatjirra and Alyawarra land Claim to the Utopia pastoral lease. "The painting and dancing of the women was a vivid demonstration of the importance of ceremonial life and of the significance their country held for them," he wrote. An elaborate ground painting likewise impressed Land Commissioner Maurice when considering the evidence of a claimant group in the Warumungu Land Claim. "One could only conclude that individual members of this group, as well as persons from adjoining countries, were deeply involved in traditional religious culture," records the commissioner's report on this claim.

Indeed, this is the essence or roots of it. Our art now provides a very important income to our artists and their families. It displays an exhilarating range of forms, materials and subject matter; the entries in this award



CLC Director Pat Dodson and CLC Assistant Director David Ross at Barunga, NT, June 1988.
Photo: Central Land Council Collection

are evidence of that. Yet much of it emerges from or in fact remains what it has been for millennia: Dreamtime stories sung, danced and painted, ritually linking groups to land where they have rights and responsibilities, and linking group members to each other. Art is a significant marker of identity in relation to land, collective identity in this case.

This does not mean the art or the artists are or can be locked in timeless tradition. Art is by nature dynamic and nowadays inevitably intercultural. Works on board and canvas borrowed from body designs; Albert Namatjira so beautifully adopted Western watercolour landscape techniques; and our artists are now also working powerfully in ceramics, photography, film and more.

We know the now world famous Central Australian Aboriginal acrylic painting movement was shaped by the post-colonial – but pre-land rights – impact of the early artists' diaspora. With their distinctive bird's eye view of the landscape, these artists' had what one analyst has called "an irrepressible drive" to portray country they had responsibility for, could never forget but were compelled to move far away from. Many would later move back home and continue painting with renewed vigour after land rights. In some cases, the art meanwhile reflected the artists' creative efforts to make sense of their new surroundings.

In these ways, as with all art, ours is an important insight into how the artists see the world, in the broadest sense.

Furthermore, through art our people "undertake a form of social dialogue" with the wider world, as one anthropologist has put it. And this converges very much with the current phase of land rights in Central Australia.

Earlier this year, in a speech to the National Native Title Conference on 40 years of land rights, I explained how a key focus for the Central Land Council is now supporting traditional owners and communities to realise their goals with opportunities arising from their strong rights in land.

The CLC's community development program supports Aboriginal groups to drive their own development by using significant sums of royalty and rent revenue for projects of lasting community benefit. Since this work began in earnest in 2005, it has helped groups to invest \$58 million in many hundreds of community development projects.

Some of these projects have supported Aboriginal art and art centres or have been implemented by them. Others have been education and training focussed, using royalties from the Granites gold mine through the Warlpiri Education and Training Trust (WETT) managed by the CLC.



CLC Chairman Wenten Rubuntja and CLC Director David Ross present Mr Rubuntja's Yeperenye painting to Prime Minister Paul Keating, Parliament House, Canberra, ACT, 1993.
Photo: Peter West, courtesy AUSPIC.

Art has signposted this step in our land rights journey too.

Key drivers of WETT, Aboriginal teachers who are also artists, have produced a complete painting of this important initiative, as tall as me and stunning in its composition, colour and vitality. What's more, they have helped my community development staff to produce a pamphlet that is effectively a dialogue with the world about the painting and the WETT initiative. The pamphlet interprets the painting and its symbols, traditional and introduced, under the headings: How WETT Started; How WETT Makes Decisions; WETT Programs.

For example, one symbol in the painting shows when "the CLC lawyers came and talked to traditional owners and they decided to sign the agreement to start WETT". Another represents "the WETT program reference groups in the four Warlpiri communities talking and sharing ideas". A jet, complete with two rows of seats, signifies "the WETT funded program that sends secondary age kids on interstate excursions to learn

new life skills". Dollar signs depict "the WETT money story", an important story for the world to hear of our mob using their money for their future. A story in art.

Practical, powerful and beautiful.

Art is part of this particular leg of the land rights journey, just as it was with us at the first legs – and long, long before that. Art has always been integral to our connection to the land.

That is why I am thrilled to mark the 40th anniversary of the Aboriginal Land Rights Act and the 50th anniversary of the Wave Hill Walk Off with the Vincent Lingiari Art Award and the Our Land Our Life Our Future exhibition at Tangentyere Artists.

David Ross
CLC Director



CLC Chairman Wenten Rubuntja and NLC Chairman Galarrwuy Yunupingu present the Barunga Statement to Prime Minister Bob Hawke, Barunga, NT, 1988.
Photo: Central Land Council Collection



[L- R] Nancy Oldfield, Maisie Kitson and Barbara Martin with their painting which describes the origins, progress and story of the Warlpiri Education and Training Trust (WETT), Yuendumu, NT, 2013.
Photo: Hannah Quinlivan

TELLING OUR STORY FROM A PLACE OF STRENGTH

Approached by the Central Land Council Director with the idea of an exhibition commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Gurindji Wave Hill Station Walk Off and the 40th anniversary of the *Aboriginal Land Rights (NT) Act 1976*, the Desart Board and I responded with much excitement.

The Wave Hill Walk Off in 1966 is major marker in our history. It occurred at a time when Aboriginal people were asserting their land rights more strongly as the first peoples of the land; and calling for improved living conditions and fair and equitable treatment as workers in the Northern Territory pastoral industry. The courageous stand by the Gurindji people and their supporters drew attention to the dispossession and disadvantage faced by Aboriginal people and powerfully influenced subsequent government moves towards the Land Rights Act passing ten years later.

The Vincent Lingiari Art Award is named after the Gurindji leader who led the Walk Off and this fight for recognition of Aboriginal land rights. But many others have fought this struggle with the vision and determination to have basic human rights as well as rights to traditional lands recognised. The Award is a tribute to all who have contributed to securing our rights. Desart values the support of Mr Lingiari's family in naming the award in honour of his leadership.

Land rights are fundamental to the identity of Aboriginal people in the NT. Our relationship to our traditional lands gives us strength in knowing who we are and where we belong, our relationships and responsibilities to others. Our art starts from this place – telling our story from a place of strength. From there, art has been a potent tool through which the status quo has been challenged, sometimes with unintentional consequences. The art of Albert Namatjira helped pave a way to citizenship when Aboriginal people had no citizenship rights; the Papunya school mural project asserted cultural identity in the time of governments' assimilationist policies and actions.

Such artwork drew attention to the artists' disadvantage, dispossession from land and culture and the social injustices Aboriginal people faced here in the 1960s and 1970s, while sowing the seeds of the internationally acclaimed Aboriginal art movements that have since emerged in Central Australia.

One of the least known aspects of the land rights movement is the Alice Springs town camp story. Historically town camps were places of refuge for an Aboriginal diaspora. Prohibited from entering Alice Springs proper, the town camps became refuges for people driven from their own country, kicked off pastoral leases or chasing stolen children. They became synonymous with Aboriginal resistance to the assimilationist policies of the 1950s and 60s. And a year after the Land Rights Act became law in 1976 a new organisation, Tangentyere Council, began as an umbrella service and advocacy organisation for all the Alice Springs town camps.

As an enterprise of Tangentyere Council, Tangentyere Artists is, then, the perfect gallery to exhibit the Vincent Lingiari Art Award shortlisted entries. The existence of this art centre is testament to the strength and determination of town camp residents and the growth and achievements of Tangentyere Council. It is a reminder of the connection between art and land rights evident in the actions of Aboriginal artists seeking land tenure simply to support their work.

Artists represented in the exhibition were asked to reflect on, and in some way portray, the past, present and/or future of land rights. The diversity of works gives us a small yet intimate insight into the variety and creativity of the possible responses to this big theme. The artists represented are continuing a long tradition of visually expressing and asserting through their art what is important to them. We see them depicting their Jukurrpa/Altyerre, being on country, land management, maintaining strong culture, community life, the future of our children and more through their artwork and the lens of land rights.

The Vincent Lingiari Award and *Our Land, Our Life, Our Future* exhibition has enabled the voices of those who are often not heard to resonate through their art. It is the voices of those who are the beneficiaries of land rights and the inheritors of the legacy of those who fought hard to have our land and other rights recognised. It is clear that the struggles continue albeit with different emphasis and priority. Art will no doubt remain as important in these struggles as it was in the fight for land rights.

Philip Watkins
Chief Executive Officer
Desart

OUR LAND OUR LIFE OUR FUTURE



Artist:
Alice Nampitjinpa Michaels
Title:
"Lappi Lappi Jukurrpa" (2016)
Art Centre:
Warlukurlangu Artists
Acrylic on canvas
122cm x 107cm

The Dreaming or Jukurrpa may seem stripped of some of its spectacle when presented to judges as evidence in land claims. But make no mistake, the Dreamtime was a dramatic time. Alice Michaels' work has been exhibited in the Northern Territory, interstate and overseas. Here her entry portrays the drama centred on the rockhole Lappi Lappi, northwest of Lake Mackay, in WA.

'This country belongs to Nampijinpa/Jamijinpa and Nangala/Jangala skin groups. Located in a sheltered basin, the rock hole at Lappi Lappi is a permanent source of water.

It is surrounded by land rich in bush tucker. In the time of the Jukurrpa (Dreamtime), many mothers with young children would gather there, believing it was a safe place to stay. But Lappi Lappi is home to a Warnayarra, a rainbow serpent that travels underground between various rock holes. One day, women were gathered at Lappi Lappi rockhole with their children, singing and dancing. When the Warnayarra heard them, it travelled silently towards them, under the water. When it reached the edge of the rock hole, it rose out of the water and ate them all.



Artist:
Alice Nampitjinpa Dixon
Title:
"Tali Tali - Sandhills" (2016)
Art Centre:
Ikuntji Artists
Acrylic on canvas
76cm x 102cm

The movement from country, and back via outstations facilitated by land rights, is familiar to many elders in Central Australia. Alice Nampitjinpa Dixon's entry remembers that time, and earlier first contact with non-Aboriginal people.

'The first time I saw a whitefella I was a young girl. I might have been eleven or thirteen, already a little bit grown up. I used to live in the bush, with my family. I saw him riding a donkey, in the sand hills. It was in my country, Taalalpi, which is near Kintore. We moved to Papunya first and I got married to my husband in Haasts Bluff. But

when they set up outstations I could move back closer to my country. I can visit it any time now.'

Alice Nampitjinpa Dixon has exhibited in the Northern Territory, interstate and overseas, solo and in many, many group exhibitions. Her work is collected in many galleries and other major institutions in the NT, interstate and internationally. Before becoming an artist, Alice worked at the school in Kintore in the NT's remote far west.



Artist:
Belle Davidson Karrika
Title:
"Travelling to Warburton" (2016)
Art Centre:
Papulankutja Artists
Acrylic on canvas
121cm x 76cm

Belle Davidson Karrika's piece reminds us of the days before land rights, and the travels repeated across Central Australia from the desert in to missions, of the strength and resourcefulness of the people involved. Belle's own extraordinary life has taken her from camping near Warburton when the nuclear bombs were tested not so far away at Maralinga, to dancing at the opening ceremony of the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games. 'This man with the two wives, one wife has four kids and the second wife two. They travel, they camp, rockhole, another rockhole, big wind break. They must

be travelling around a week to get to the mission. They catch rabbits and goanna to give to the children. No blankets, ngalta. They make a fire in the middle to keep the children warm. Same time, they carry dog skin to sell to get tea, sugar, blankets.

This is how we travelled, back then. I am one of those children. My mother had two children. We headed to Warburton, Belle and Nellie. Sometimes we made a spinifex fire so people knew we were travelling.'



Artist:
David Frank
Title:
"Our Future" (2016)
Art Centre:
Iwantja Arts
Acrylic on linen
36cm x 51cm

David Frank's work has been exhibited recently around Australia. Earlier he worked with the South Australian Police for over 15 years, translating and using his ngangkari or traditional healing skills to help calm tense situations. And, like Vincent Lingiari of Wave Hill walk-off fame, and so many NT Aboriginal elders, David worked on cattle stations.

'Looking back at the story of when Vincent Lingiari helped all his people to walk off the station at Wave Hill, I think about how strong that man was for all Aboriginal people. It was the start of

something big. We too have been stockmen, us men, many of us. When we were young, we worked hard on cattle stations for rations, learning and helping to make use of the land for cattle and farming. The background to our rights is a long one; Lingiari helped to start the land rights story.'



Artist:
Dianne Golding (Ungukalpi)
Title:
"Tjanpi helicopter and four camels"
(2016)
Art Centre:
Tjanpi Desert Weavers
Tjanpi (native grass), wool, raffia
80cm x 80cm x 160cm

Dianne Golding is a proficient painter and an accomplished fibre artist who makes baskets and sculptures through Tjanpi Desert Weavers, experimenting with different shapes. For her sculptural pieces she draws inspiration from the animals on the Ngaanyatjarra lands, from the camp dogs in communities to the goannas, porcupines, and rabbits hunted out bush. In her entry she depicts the important work of Indigenous Rangers, facilitated by land rights and land councils, often on Indigenous Protected Areas (IPAs).

‘When the Ngaanyatjarra lands first got IPA status, a Ranger coordinator and others went up in a big yellow helicopter to view land around Warakurna Community. They saw large herds of feral camels that kept coming into Warakurna at night, breaking taps and fences. The Rangers set up bores with water tanks and troughs outside the community, which stopped the camels wandering in to get water. They use helicopters to muster the camels into yards. The camels are then herded onto big trucks and into town for meat.’



Artists:
Engawala Artists:
Maryanne Tilmouth, Mary Tilmouth,
Janine Tilmouth, Patsy Tilmouth,
Annalisa Neal, Cathy Inkamala,
Elizabeth Dixon.
Title:
"Walking in two worlds" (2016)
Acrylic on canvas
90cm x 150cm

This collaboration suggests there is in fact a big wide world out there for Aboriginal youth – provided they remain grounded in a knowledge of their country; and with a hope they return there as role models to others.

‘In the past we hunted for bush tucker nearly every day and all spoke the same language. Our grandfathers, fathers, grandmothers and our mothers used to travel by foot to different communities to visit family but would always return home to their land.

This artwork shows that today the elders are teaching the younger generation how to apply paint to their bodies and do traditional dancing. And the symbol in the middle shows that different people are coming together all as one and learning new things.

The last frame shows that our younger generation will get a better education in the city when they’re at the appropriate age. We hope our children continue studies at university and get better jobs in the future, but will always come home and hunt for bush tucker and be the role models for the younger kids.’



Artist:
Eunice Napanangka Jack
Title:
"Kuru Yultu" (2016)
Art Centre:
Ikuntji Artists
Acrylic on linen
70cm x 150cm

Many Central Australian elder artists portray country they have rights in, responsibility for and retain strong knowledge of, though circumstances have moved them far from it. Eunice Napanangka Jack is one.

'I walked to Haasts Bluff when I was a little girl. My mother carried me. We were hungry and we walked all the way. My father is from Blackstone and my mother is a Warlpiri lady. We travelled all the way from Tjukurla and came to Haasts Bluff. I sat down there. I know that story and country from Kuru Yultu, my father's country.

But I can only go back sometimes. I get really lonely for that place. One day I might go back and visit.'

Eunice Jack has had a number of solo exhibitions interstate. Her work has been in many group exhibitions in the Northern Territory, interstate and overseas and it remains in NT, interstate and overseas collections.



Artist:
Mervyn Rubuntja
Title:
"Mining on traditional land" (2016)
Art Centre:
Many Hands
Watercolour on paper
54cm x 38cm

Land rights have allowed Aboriginal people a strong voice on mining. Widely seen as an artist and often heard as an activist, this entry is Mervyn Rubuntja's mining message.

'In 2015 I travelled to Coober Pedy to teach local Aboriginal artists how to paint landscape. A lot of mining was happening around there. It made me think about my country and how concerned I am about its future. If 'they' mine my traditional land it will destroy the landscape. It might damage water quality. People should know that they need to keep their traditional land safe from mining.

I started this painting at Coober Pedy and finished it in Alice Springs where I live. It is different to my usual work because the country at Coober Pedy is different. Through my work I want to stop 'them' from mining. For example, mining of uranium and other minerals near Aileron community (also my country) is no good. This painting is my statement. It gives us an insight into the impact mining could have on our country. Visitors, come to see our country, don't mine it!

**Artists:**

*Many Hands Collaborative –
Yipirinya (Yeperenye):*

Kevin Namatjira, Reinhold Inkamala,
Mervyn Rubuntja, Lennie Namatjira
and Gloria Pannka

Title:

"Yipirinya (caterpillar) Dreaming"
(2016)

Art Centre:

Iltja Ntjarra (Many Hands) Art
Centre

Watercolour on boards
12 panels (50cm x 75cm)

Collectively widely exhibited, in this carefully structured collaboration based on land associations, these artists depict particular Dreaming travels through country around Alice Springs.

'Western and Northern Arrernte ancestors are travelling from the north and the west to Mbantua (Alice Springs). They are going through to Emily Gap.

The white rock in the very left part of the painting is part of the Yipirinya (caterpillar) Dreaming story, about the Yipirinya's tail which was chopped off across the dry riverbed in Mbantua.

Our land and our family connections and collaborations are crucial to our lives and our future.

This painting is a collaboration of five Hermannsburg School artists. Each artist has permission to paint their own country. This dreaming was chosen because it allowed a number of Arrernte artists to take part and paint their land.

Several trips to country were undertaken to get inspiration for the work, and celebrate the MacDonnell Ranges together as a group. Each artist painted in their own style while considering the painting styles of the other artists.'



Artist:
Gloria Pannka
Title:
"Copyright for Namatjira" (2016)
Art Centre:
Iltja Ntjarra (Many Hands) Art Centre
Watercolour on paper
51cm x 71cm

'In the 1950s The Public Trustee for the Northern Territory Government was responsible for administering the will and estate for Albert Namatjira. The Public Trustee decided to sell the copyright to all of my grandfather's works for \$8,500 to John Brackenber, based on the friendship between Brackenber and my grandfather. Since then, my family hasn't owned or benefited from this copyright. I feel that this is wrong. My painting depicts my country, Tywerentye (the West MacDonnell Ranges) and this injustice to my family. I produced this painting when artist Tony Albert visited my art centre. I was inspired

by the statements he makes in his artworks. I feel that in the future the copyright should be owned by my family, as Albert Namatjira painted our country and the copyright to his paintings belongs with us. Copyright for Namatjira is my statement.'

Gloria Pannka's entry is thus an artistic meditation at the intersection of law, land and history. Her entries in the Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award have twice been highly commended; and her work exhibited and collected in the NT, interstate and overseas.



Artist:
Heather Kamarra Shearer
Title:
"Tanya Kamarra Shearer" (2016)
Acrylic on canvas
97cm x 78cm

Heather Kamarra Shearer has won awards for her artwork, exhibited it widely, worked in the arts and other fields, served on numerous committees, run workshops, made presentations and completed commissions. Her entry was inspired by her personal journey referenced to outstations, those small communities scattered across the Northern Territory that multiplied with – and are now synonymous with – land rights.

'My artwork largely depicts my journey as a member of the Stolen Generations. It is consistent with my Arrernte heritage as taught to me by my mothers. Following my

visit home earlier this year, this painting shows my intention and family support to reclaim my birth-name and move back to Ntaria to set up my own outstation. I left Ntaria (Labrapuntja Outstation) for Port Augusta nine years ago. It is time for me to return and encourage my children to come too.

I have been involved in community organisations back here; I respect my culture, and love my family and country. So this painting represents my future as a valued member of my family and the community I was removed from.'



Artist:
Margaret Boko
Title:
"Finally we had enough!" (2016)
Art Centre:
Tangentyere Artists
Acrylic on linen
148cm x 87cm

'When I was young woman, we were moved to Amoonguna. A big mob of people were moved there to live. In town, whitefellas said and wrote on papers, 'This is our land, not yours'. But we always knew. We all knew, us Aboriginal people. Those whitefellas were telling lies! Finally, we had enough! We wanted our land. We wanted it out bush, and in town. So we all marched through town, biggest mob of Aboriginal people, while all the whitefellas locked themselves in their houses. We were angry. We were sick of all that humbug from whitefellas, just telling stories

about who owns country. We always knew who owned it, where we belonged. And in the end, government agreed, when they made that new piece of paper (the *Aboriginal Land Rights (NT) Act 1976*).'

A Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award finalist twice, Margaret Boko's work has been described as that of a social historian, depicting the commonplace as well as the landmarks in her life and that of her people.



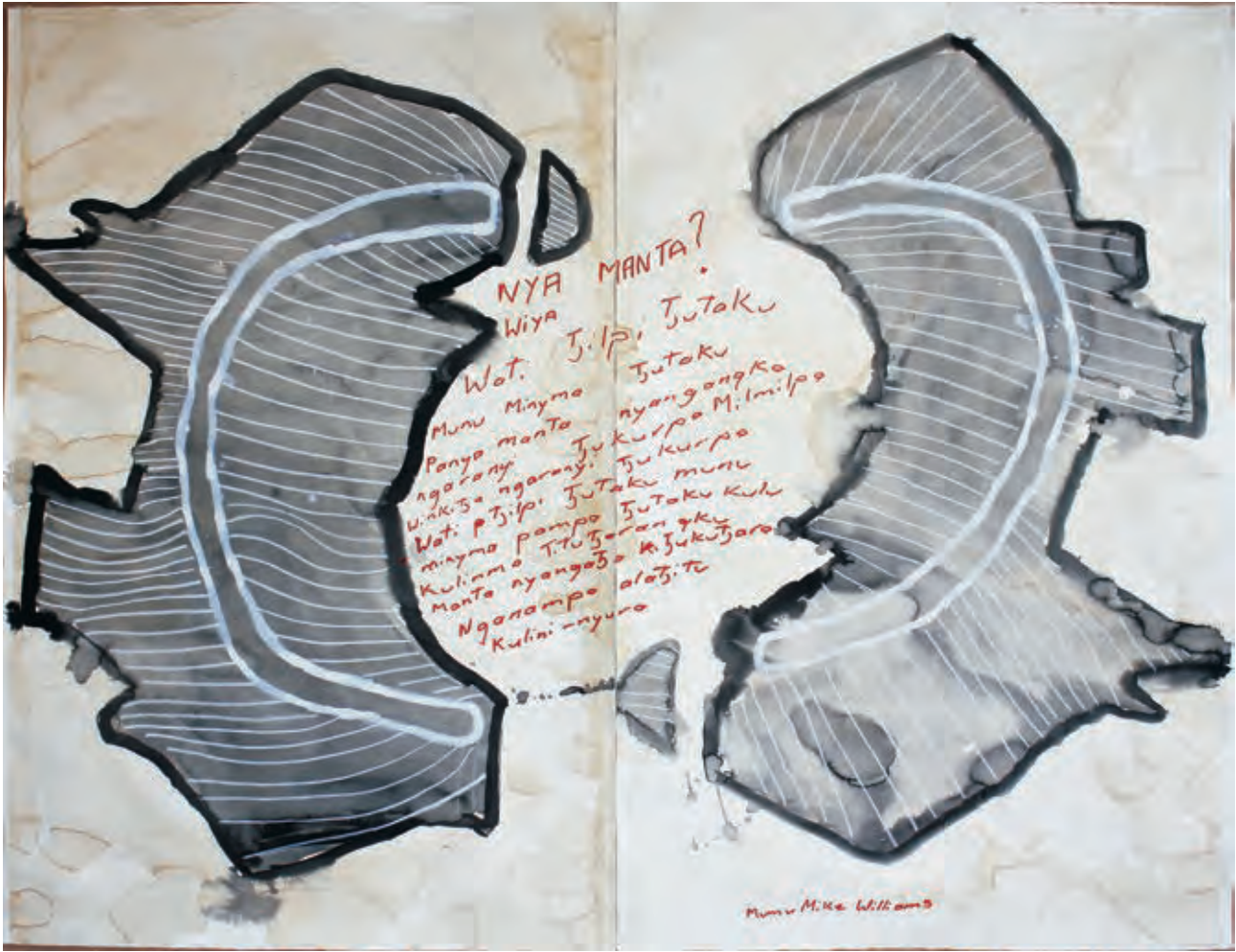
Artist:
Marlene Rubuntja
Title:
"My future is in my hands!" (2016)
Art Centre:
Yarrenyty Arltère
Mixed media soft sculpture

Like much of this extensively exhibited artist's work, Marlene Rubuntja's entry reflects on, and draws inspiration from, those pockets of important land rights in town, the town camps.

'I was thinking about how people used to live down at the creek here in Alice Springs. I used to live down there too much. There were no town camps. One old man even used to roll out his swag in some whitefella's yard and sleep there. We had no home, just like that homeless mob, poor things, who I saw in the city. No-one put any money in our cup so we had to fix

things up ourselves. Some old people started talking and working to get town camps; like my father and my uncle and lots of other strong people. That mob was real strong, working for everyone.

Now we have 18 town camps, homes for our children. We have safety. I have my family living all around me. And I have a beautiful view. They can have their million dollar view in the city; I've got the MacDonnell Ranges for my view.'



Artist:
Mumu Mike Williams

Title:
"Nya Manta" (2016)

Art Centre:
Mimili Maku Arts

Tea, ink, chalk pastel on paper –
framed by kulata (spear)
200cm x 150cm

Mumu Mike Williams is the pastor of Mimili community and a ngangkari traditional healer. He has worked as a drover and a carpenter. His artwork has hung in group exhibitions around the Northern Territory and interstate.

‘I’ve been painting for a long time, always painting my Tjukurpa, ‘Minyma Kutjura’, about two sisters travelling on country.

This year I’ve started painting the map of Australia and using my paintings to talk about important things. I’m talking about things where I live, and about how we’ve got to be strong and protect our

land and culture. The map of Australia shows that even though I’m talking about my country, these stories are important for all Aboriginal people.

With this painting I’m talking about land rights, and what the Land Rights Act means for us. I’m saying: “Nya manta? What is land rights? All the old men and women here on these lands, they’re the owners of the Tjukurpa, their law and culture, their heritage. This land belongs to them. Listen: keep the land and its stories strong! Protect it and keep it strong for us – for everybody”.



Artist:
Nyurpaya Kaika Burton

Title:
"Self Portrait" (2014)

Art Centre:
Tjala Arts

Tjanpi, acrylic on linen, punu (wood),
audio
120cm x 120cm

Nyurpaya Kaika Burton is a painter and fibre artist with work included in many group exhibitions and collected in several major galleries. She has curated a project at the Art Gallery of South Australia and been a Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award finalist. In this self-portrait installation she tells her story to her grandchildren, part of the important transmission of cultural knowledge from, about and for the land.

‘Our grandparents looked after law, culture, land and family well by themselves. And relatively privately.

Kumpilpa kanyiningi. They didn’t need money. They had plenty of food. People were not sickly. Tjana pika wiya, kunpu nyinangi. Everyone was strong and healthy in mind and body and culture, which they passed on to their children. But now we have adopted different ways of passing on our culture. We now use paintings, tjanpi sculptures and punu as some alternative ways. However we do it, we are keeping our culture here at home, on our own country. Mantangka ananguku tjitji tjutaku. Our children will inherit the land, so we are busy teaching them our culture, in our own way.’



Artists:
Tjanpi Artists: Anawari Mitchell, Anaglyia Mitchell, Janet Forbes, Nora Davidson, Jennifer Mitchell, Maimie Butler, Prudence Mitchell, Pamela Hogan

Title:
"Kuku Walykumunu" (2016)

Art centre:
Tjanpi Desert Weavers

Tjanpi (native grass), wool, raffia
25cm x 38cm x 125cm

Artwork elements: *Karnilpa* (long-shaped basket), *Wiilyka* (Cat), *Nani* (rabbit), *Tjilku* (baby), Basket filled with *ngari* (honey ants), *marku* (witchety grubs) and *uldiuldi* (grass soaked in mushed *ngari*)

In the days before we had shopping bags, our grandmothers used *karnilpa* (yandying dish) to carry *kuka* (meat) and *mirrka* (food) they caught whilst hunting. As *minyma* (women) couldn't carry their *tjilku* (baby) whilst they were hunting, they would also lay them in the *karnilpa*.

In those days, *minyma* would walk and get things like *walku* (quandong), *ngintaka* (goanna), *marku* (witchety grub) and *ngari* (honey ants). They would also get *nani* (rabbit) and *wiilyka* (cat), even before the whitefellas came, because these animals got here before them.

We made this *karnilpa* with *kuka*, *mirrka* and the *tjilku* to show people how important the *karnilpa* was to *minyma* when they were travelling, hunting and looking after their families. Although our grandmothers made real *karnilpas* smaller and from wood, we did this one so you can see all the *kuka walykumu* (good food) that *Yarnangu* (Ngaanyatjarra people) used to eat.



Artist:
Raymond Reiff

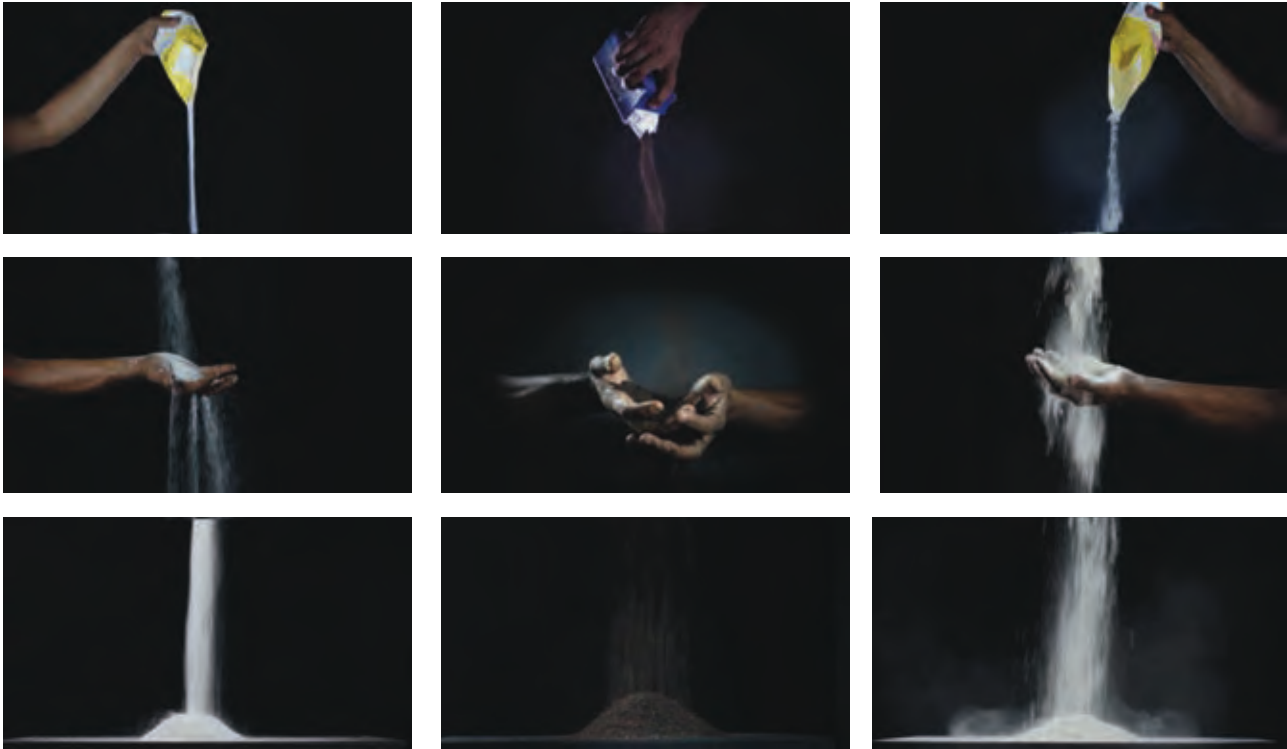
Title:
"Our land before time, Our land for the future" (2016)

Acrylic on canvas
140cm x 158cm

In the past our ancestors roamed the land given to them by their ancestors and passed the land on to our Grandparents who then handed down it on to us. Our families camped on our land, looked for bush tucker and looked after our sacred sites. Our land was an open country with no fences or roads to stop our ancestors from roaming around freely on their own land. They camped anywhere they wanted without asking permission from anyone only their elders. Today there are fences everywhere and you need permission from

pastoralists and Governments to go on our own land to visit sacred sites, camp and also to go hunting.

Today we live in our communities and traditional homelands. We still hunt and look after our sacred sites. Our elders and land council delegates speak up for our communities and country. They meet and work together with governments to build a future where we can all live and work together as one.



Artist:
Robert Fielding
Title:
"In our hands" (2016)
Art Centre:
Mimili Maku Arts
Video
Duration – 1min 47sec

Robert Fielding is an arts worker and artist whose work, often incorporating photography, has been included in many group exhibitions, several interstate collections and won awards including the 2015 NATSIAA Work on Paper Prize. His entry addresses the shared histories of Aboriginal people.

‘It’s important to learn from the lessons of the past in order to move forward. The Land Rights Act is a significant acknowledgement of the unbreakable connection of Aboriginal people to their country. Important events like the Wave Hill

Walk-off and the establishment of the Act have shaped our lives. I’ve taken the famous image of Gough Whitlam pouring the earth into Vincent Lingiari’s hand as the starting point for my work. The symbols of tea, flour and sugar are the rations imposed from above – like so many policies that greatly affect Indigenous people.

But my work depicts cycles of life: our customs and rituals, both new and old, our struggle, our resilience, our hunger, our sustenance, our survival, our eternal connection to our land. Our past, our present, our future – now in our hands.’



Artist:
Steven Jupurrurla Nelson
Title:
"Janganpa Jukurrpa (brush-tail possum Dreaming) – Mawurrji" (2016)
Art Centre:
Warlukurlangu Artists
Acrylic on canvas
152cm x 91cm

Dreaming stories have been a critical part of traditional rights to land for many, many years. The tracks of ancestral beings in these Dreaming (or Jukurrpa) stories are essential markers in land rights and claims. In his entry, the emerging yet already highly skilled artist Steven Jupurrurla Nelson portrays a Janganpa Jukurrpa story.

‘The Janganpa (brush-tail possum) Jukurrpa travels all over Warlpiri country. This story comes from a big hill called Mawurrji, west of Yuendumu and north of Pikilyi (Vaughan Springs). A group of Janganpa ancestors lived there.

Every night they went out in search of food. Their hunting trips took them to Wirli and Wanapirdi, where they found pamapardu (flying ants), and Ngarlkirdipini looking for water. Meanwhile, a woman with the subsection or skin name Nampijinpa was living at Mawurrji with her two daughters. She gave her daughters in marriage to a Janganpa with Jupurrurla skin name, but later decided to instead run away with her daughters. The Jupurrurla Janganpa angrily pursued them. He tracked them back to Mawurrji where he killed them with a stone axe. Their bodies are now rocks at Mawurrji.’



Artists:
Tilau Nangala and Papunyu Tjupi Artists
Title:
"Look around country" (2016)
Art Centre:
Papunya Tjupi Arts
Synthetic polymer paint on canvas
107cm x 243cm

Led by the extensively exhibited and inspirational elder Tilau Nangala, this collaboration in turn tells of traditional owners of land collaborating with the Central Land Council.

“Look around” is an expression used in communities when traditional owners working with the Central Land Council (CLC) go visiting country for cultural business and land management. We visit country for burning, ceremonies, meetings and more. We tell stories about country and we explain the landscape to the CLC Rangers and anthropologists.

Collaborating with CLC means traditional owners are empowered to make decisions about land. We have land rights that make us responsible for our land, especially cultural places others have to respect. As custodians, we take care of country and CLC helps us look after it.

Women with the subsection or skin names Nangala and Nampitjinpa are together the custodians of certain water Dreaming sites in Central Australia. This painting depicts people visiting water Dreaming country during “look around” with CLC.’



Artist:
Tjunkara Ken
Title:
"Seven Sisters" (2016)
Art Centre:
Tjala Arts
Acrylic on linen
197cm x 198cm

Three times finalist in the Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award, the widely exhibited and collected Tjunkara Ken’s entry tells the Seven Sisters Tjukurpa story of the Pleiades and Orion constellations. But it is also very down to earth, to land.

‘The Seven Sisters are Pleiades and Orion is Nyiru or Nyirunya (a lusty or bad man). The sisters travel repeatedly from the sky to earth to escape Nyiru’s unwanted attentions. They turn into human form to escape him, but he always finds them and they flee back to the sky. Nyiru tries to catch them by

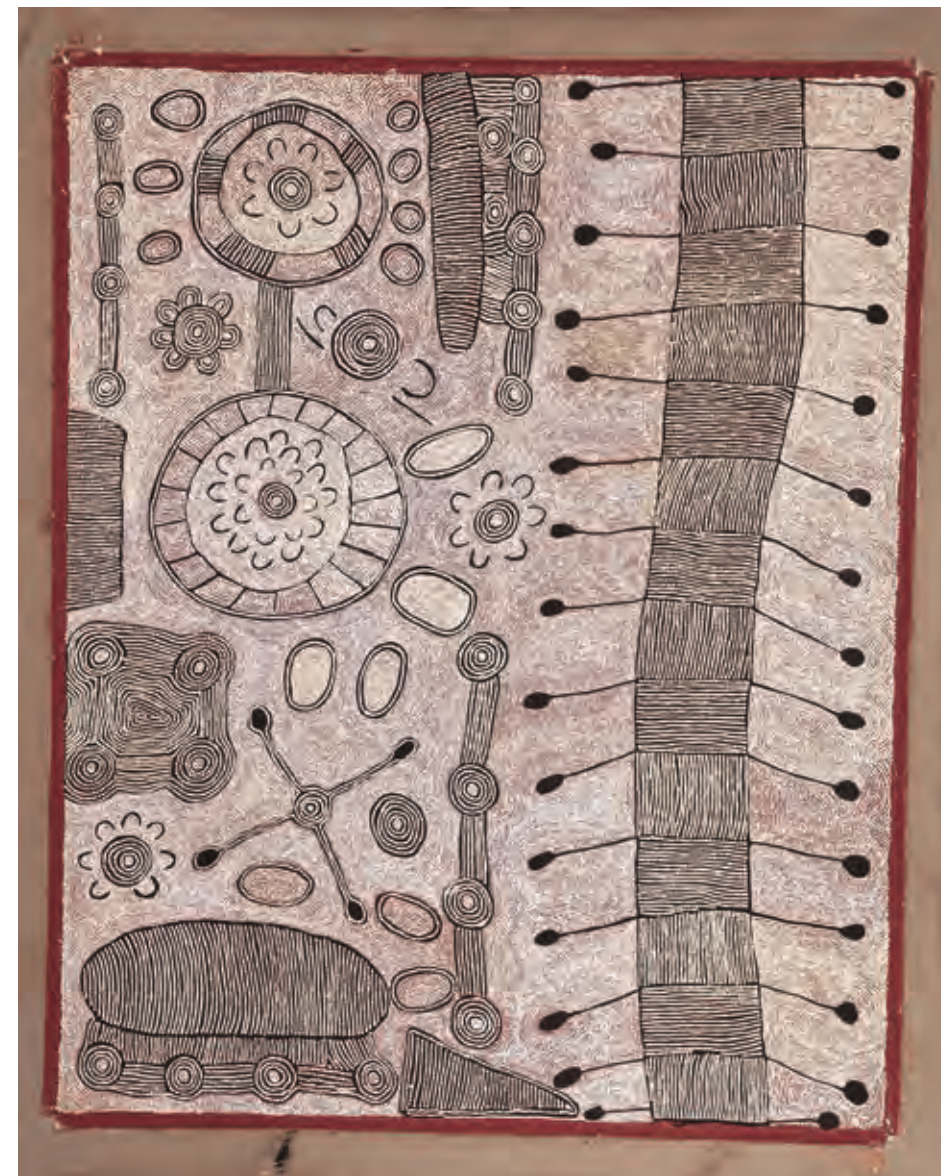
turning into the most tempting kampurarpra (bush tomatoes) for the sisters to eat and the most beautiful Ili (fig) tree for them to camp under. But the sisters know about his magic. They go hungry and flee through the night. Every now and again one of them falls victim to his ways. He captures the youngest sister. But with the help of the eldest, the youngest escapes and eventually the sisters fly back into the sky to escape Nyiru and re-form their constellation.’



Artist:
Vincent Namatjira
Title:
"Vincent Lingiari and Gough Whitlam"(2016)
Art Centre:
Iwantja Arts
Acrylic on canvas
152cm x 122cm

'Vincent Lingiari stood up for the rights of our people; he was a strong and wise man. He made Australia and the politicians sit up and hear the truth about this country, that this land belongs to us and it also owns us. I've painted the picture of Mr Lingiari holding his hand out and catching the red sand that Prime Minister Gough Whitlam used as a way to show his government's agreement with our land rights. Because of Mr Lingiari's courage, the Land Rights Act and Central Land Council can continue to support and do many good works for our people.'

Vincent Namatjira has exhibited many times, around Australia and overseas. Museums overseas have acquired his work. It has been shortlisted in a number of awards, including twice in the Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award.



Artist:
Yalti Napangati
Title:
"Marrapinti" (2016)
Art Centre:
Papunya Tula
Acrylic on canvas
153cm x 122cm

'This painting depicts designs associated with the rockhole and soakage site of Marrapinti, west of Kiwirrkura Community. During ancestral times a large group of women gathered there, heading east. While at Marrapinti the women made the nose bones, also known as marrapinti, worn through a hole made in the nose web. These were originally relatively commonly used by both men and women, but are now only worn by the older generation in ceremonies. Upon completion of ceremonies at Marrapinti, the women continued their travels east to Ngaminya and then on to Wilkinkarra (Lake

Mackay). The various shapes in this painting represent the features of the landscape, and the bush foods the women collected as they travelled.'

Yalti Napangati is among the small group of Pintupi who had no contact with Europeans until late in 1984. Before that, she lived west of Wilkinkarra. She now lives and paints in Kiwirrkura, and has exhibited in a number of group exhibitions around Australia and overseas. In 1999 she contributed to the Kiwirrkura women's artwork as part of the Western Desert Dialysis Appeal

CENTRAL LAND COUNCIL

The Central Land Council is a Commonwealth corporate entity. The CLC operates under the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* and it is also a Native Title Representative Body under the *Native Title Act 1993*.

The CLC covers an area of 750,000 square kilometres in the southern half of the Northern Territory. In the CLC’s region, traditional Aboriginal landowners own more than 400,000 square kilometres of Aboriginal freehold land under the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act*. This represents more than half of the almost 780,000 square kilometres of land covered by the CLC.

The CLC is governed by 90 Aboriginal people elected from communities in the southern half of the Northern Territory. While the legislation governing the CLC is only for the Northern Territory, many of the CLC's constituents’ traditional country extends across state borders.

The CLC traces its origins to the history of the Aboriginal struggle for justice and their rights to their traditional land.

This history includes the famous strike and walk off by the Gurindji families at Wave Hill cattle station in 1966. The strike drew international attention to the dispossession and disadvantage of Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory.

DESART

Desart is the Association of Central Australian Aboriginal Arts and Craft Centres. Established in 1992, and incorporated in 1993, it now has 41 independently governed Aboriginal art and craft centres as members, who in turn collectively represent approximately 8000 Aboriginal artists.

Desart is directed by a 10 member Aboriginal executive committee elected from its art centre members. Desart’s region of operations cover an area of 1221 million square kilometres extending from the southern part of the Northern Territory into the Anangu Pitjantjatjara (APY) region of South Australia and into the Ngaanyatjarra region of Western Australia.

In February 1973 the Commonwealth set up a Royal Commission under Mr Justice Woodward to inquire into how land rights might be achieved in the Northern Territory. The commissioner’s first report in July 1973 recommended that a Central and a Northern Land Council be established in order to present to him the views of Aboriginal people.

After considering Justice Woodward’s final report, the Whitlam Labor government drew up a Land Rights Bill, but was dismissed before the law was passed.

The Australian Parliament eventually passed the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* on the 16th December 1976 and the law came into operation on 26th January 1977.

It transferred title to most of the Aboriginal reserve lands in the Northern Territory to its traditional owners and gave other traditional land owners the opportunity to claim land not already owned, leased or being used by someone else. The major townships in the region, Alice Springs and Tennant Creek where excluded.

Today Aboriginal people own almost half of the land in the Northern Territory.

www.clc.org.au

Desart is a collective voice for central Australian Aboriginal art centres on matters of shared interest and delivers programs to members that support the development and maintenance of strong governance, administration and infrastructure. It prioritises opportunities for its membership to promote their art and crafts locally, nationally and internationally and to further their ability to remain autonomous and sustainable Aboriginal businesses.

Desart’s programs and services recognise art centres are a vital part of community life in remote central Australia and its mission is to provide support so they grow and remain stronger for art, for culture and for country.

www.desart.com.au

TANGENTYERE ARTISTS

‘Relha ntjaarraka kangkentge urrkaapuma pmara Tangentyere Artists.’

[The many ladies are proud working together at Tangentyere Artists]

Statement (in Western Arrernte) by the artists of Tangentyere about Tangentyere Artists Art Centre.

Tangentyere Artists are part of Tangentyere Council in Alice Springs. The Council was established in the 1970s for and by Aboriginal people, and is now the primary service provider for 18 Alice Springs housing associations, known as town camps.

Many Aboriginal Alice Springs residents longed for an art centre to call their own, to challenge the private dealers and carpet baggers plaguing the town.

Tangentyere Council’s art service was first established in 2005, initially providing targeted skills development workshops and some outreach services across a range of town camps. Through the Tangentyere Council Executive, town camp residents were striving for a full time art centre to meet their needs.

Today, with a purpose built gallery, studio and administration, and a professional development program, Tangentyere Artists is the hub for arts activities across Alice Springs town camps.

The art centre mission is to provide innovative, effective and sustainable art programs that foster and support the aspirations and decisions of town camp people. As a not-for-profit organisation, Tangentyere Artists return one hundred percent of proceeds to the artists and their services.

As Jane Young, East Arrernte woman, Chair of Desart, town camp resident and artist, who commenced painting with Tangentyere Artists in 2005, explains:

‘Everyone knows Tangentyere Council, and because it’s Aboriginal owned and directed, everyone trusts Tangentyere Council, so they wanted their art centre to be a part of Tangentyere. It was the best thing, you know? It was the right place for all of us – we are all welcome here: all cultural groups, all languages, all the people!’

‘Now, Tangentyere Artists means Town Camp artists are learning new things every day, and at the same time, keeping their culture strong.’

www.tangentyereartists.org.au

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Central Land Council and Desart would like to thank the following people for their support with the Vincent Lingiari Art Award and *Our Land, Our Life, Our Future* exhibition.

David Avery, Marlene Chisholm, Brenda Croft, Josie Douglas, Coby Edgar, Stephen Gilchrist, Hannah Grace, Craig Elliott, Robert Fielding, David Jagger, Annie Keely, Mellisa Kramer, Jane Lloyd, Marisa Maher, Ruth McMillan, James Nugent, Sue O'Connor, Hetti Perkins, Marie Rancon, David Ross, Rob Roy, Bronwyn Taylor, Will Tennent, Tina Tilhard, Richard Tuckwell, Petronella Vaarzon-Morel, Maria Van Neervan-Currie, Timmy Vincent, Philip Watkins, Penny Watson, Jayne Weepers, Elke Wiesman, Robert Wesley-Smith, Carmel Young, Doro Zufall.



Thanks to Peter Kittle Motor Company, Newmont Tanami and Copyright Agency Cultural Fund for supporting the award, exhibition and catalogue.





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