



June 22, 2017

Dear Friends,

Here's the latest Kimberley art news from Broome - Enjoy!

The DRS team



Australian Government



Funding for the artwork commissions has been supported by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body.

New Kimberley Artwork Commissions

Desert River Sea (DRS) alongside Kimberley Aboriginal arts centres are now working on new collaborative artworks which will form the heart of an Aboriginal art exhibition to go on display at the Art Gallery of WA in 2018.

These artworks and exhibition will mark the culmination of AGWA's six-year Desert River Sea project. Artists from eight Kimberley art making communities will each submit a collaborative work for the exhibition reflecting the diversity of influences and art practice across the Kimberley.

Funding for the artwork commissions has been supported by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body.

Over the course of the project's multiple field trips to art centres and interviews with artists, DRS has observed that artists enjoy working in a collaborative way as it allows greater participation and opportunities for inter-generational teaching, often resulting in artworks which hold particular

socio-cultural and/or historical significance. In light of this, the new works will be predominantly collaborative pieces.

The artworks will be conceived via a culturally appropriate process involving senior artists and art centre management, designed to produce work reflective of each centre's cultural priorities and contemporary concerns. The commissions allow the art centres and artists the opportunity and freedom to experiment beyond the dictates of the Indigenous art market and audience expectations. The exciting premise of this is that media, form and thematic direction are all firmly in the hands of the artists. This artist-led approach has been the cornerstone of the Desert River Sea strategy since its inception.

Working alongside art centre staff, the Desert River Sea team will closely follow the development of each artwork documenting the process through written and audiovisual records. They will also enlist the assistance of Kimberley Aboriginal Art Professionals who have been part of Desert River Sea's Visual Arts Leadership Program (VALP). This group has a vital role in the project's final stage, liaising between artists and AGWA, and applying the skills developed during leadership and practical workshops on art handling, gallery processes, storytelling and curation.

Desert River Sea: the exhibition will be on display at the Art Gallery of WA at the end of 2018. A major publication will also accompany the exhibition.

AGWA would also like to acknowledge the ongoing support from the project's Principal partner Rio Tinto for their ongoing belief and investment in the value and legacy of this project.

Desert River Sea Partner

RioTinto



*Image credits: (L to R): Sisters Sonia Kurarra and Daisy Japulija working on their Perspex pieces in a shady spot. Daisy Japulija, Billabongs, 2017 60x120cm. Nada Rawlins at work on Perspex
© Mangkaja Arts 2017*

Mangkaja Perspex Workshops

The Mangkaja Artists of Fitzroy Crossing, already widely regarded for their dynamic artworks and experimentation with new forms and presentation, are bursting on the scene again with radiant new acrylic on Perspex artworks. A first for the Indigenous Australian art industry and about to create a frenzy amongst admirers and collectors alike.

The result of recent workshops, the artworks positively convey the energy and enthusiasm of the artists who enjoyed and successfully adapted to the new medium harnessing it to enhance the luminosity and brushwork of their already bold and vibrant styles.

We asked Belinda Cook, Mangkaja Arts Manager, to tell us more about the recent workshops and outcome:

DRS: How did the workshop come about?

BC: The workshops have been funded by DCA and were a result of some experimentation at the art centre with materials from another workshop. Emilia Galatis an experienced arts centre industry professional and facilitator came on board to facilitate the development in focused workshops at Mangkaja studio, Gwardi Aged Care and Marnin Studio in Fitzroy Crossing.

DRS: Where did the idea of painting on Perspex come from?

BC: Initially Mangkaja was undertaking a youth mural project that involved large boards being painted and to protect them we purchased large Perspex sheets. Our studio coordinator, Wes Maselli, had the idea to paint directly onto the sheets, and while it didn't work for that particular project, Sonia Kurarra, an artist renowned for her passion to paint on all and every medium painted a large work on one of the left over sheets. Everyone was blown away by the piece and the project developed from there.

DRS: Apart from Sonia Kurarra, had any of the artists worked on Perspex before the workshop?

BC: The Perspex is a new medium for our artists and from our research new for the Indigenous Australian art industry. Our artists have been experimenting with board and tin along with the more traditional canvas and paper work, and were excited to trial this medium.



*(L to R): Sonia Kurarra at work on a giant gold Perspex work. Sonia Kurarra, Martuwarra, 2017 60x90cm
© Mangkaja Arts 2017*

DRS: Which artists have been participating in the workshops?

BC: These first works on Perspex have predominantly been created by our senior women at Mangkaja, although some of our men are starting to take an interest with

fantastic results as well. The brush movement the Perspex allows and the luminosity it creates in the paint colours only enhances the vibrant work of the Mangkaja women and their bold styles. Key artists being exhibited at Short St in the coming show include: Nada Rawlins, Sonia Kurarra, Daisy Japulija, Rosie Uhl, Lisa Uhl, Rosie King Tarku and Jean Rangi. Other artists experimenting with the medium include Penny K Lyons, Tommy May, John Prince Siddon and Wangkajunga artists Nora Tjookootja and Rosie Goodjie.

DRS: How do the artists find this new medium?

BC: This medium has been embraced by our most senior artists, finding that the brush moves so smoothly on the surface of the Perspex. Not only our senior women but a number of younger artists and artists who have only ever painted on small canvas have tried their hand at painting on Perspex and are enjoying the results. We are also engaging younger artists in the ideas around jewellery making with this new medium.

DRS: So the artists are going to make other artforms from the Perspex too? Tell us about the jewellery!

BC: Jewellery is the next project and development we are trialling with the assistance of Emilia Galatis (facilitator) and Jessica Jubb, a WA jeweller who has moved to Fitzroy Crossing. With their assistance our artists are exploring ways to create bold jewellery pieces, the first are of course remaining with the artists who will not take them off! We have some other experimental play with the Perspex in the works we will showcase down the track.

DRS: Tell us more about how working in this medium has encouraged new artists to have a go?

BC: This project has seen the engagement of artists from Marnin Studio at Marninwantikura Women's centre, the women there who specialise in boab nut painting have enjoyed experimenting with this new medium and will have some smaller works presented at the short street show, incorporating their fabric and print on paperwork, a first exhibition opportunity for some. The medium has definitely engaged some new artists at Mangkaja and we are thrilled by their enthusiasm and results.

DRS: Which artists seem to be enjoying the workshops the most?

BC: Artist Rosie Uhl has been a surprise participant whose works will feature in the Short St exhibition 'Mangkaja Water'. She has never before been exhibited and the artworks she is producing are stunning. Also Lisa Uhl who has not been well enough to paint for a while has really enjoyed this process and is finding the medium much easier to work with given her physical limitations, the results are pretty incredible, she's back at her best. Nada Rawlins has actually been selected as a finalist in the NATSIAA's this

year for a large work on Perspex, and previously won the Shinju Art Prize for her first Perspex piece in 2016.



(L to R): *The gentle Rosie Uhl working on her Perspex at Gwardi Aged Care. Rosie Uhl, Jila Living Water, 2017 60x90cm*
© Mangkaja Arts 2017

DRS: Is there anything that the artists find challenging about painting on Perspex?

BC: The process of painting onto the Perspex is almost a reverse of that onto canvas, where the first layer is what will be viewed most prominently, this has been a challenge for artists who work with fine detail. But most artists have taken to it quickly and enjoy the process of discovery. The movement of the paint on the Perspex has meant that layers created by artists are more viewable, with a transparent quality we don't see in canvas. This has allowed artists whose works have many layers to showcase those in a new way.

DRS: So the process is different to painting on canvas then, tell us more about the techniques and approach?

BC: The medium allows for smoother brush work, it also separates the paint in a new way which highlights layered work and brush texture. We have incorporated paint pens into the process and the artists are getting some exciting graffiti-esque results. The paint pens are a fabulous addition and have been a great development for some artists who are combining paint pen/graffiti work with their traditional acrylic paint with bold and vibrant outcomes combining pen detail with the finesse of brush work.

DRS: So the artists are being more experimental painting on Perspex?

BC: There is a lot of experimentation and we see this continuing for a while yet, everyone is enjoying themselves and more inspired in their more traditional practices on canvas as well.

DRS: Have artists been depicting different subject matter/stories to the ones they usually paint on canvas?

BC: Subjects and stories in the works are relating very closely to the work most artists produce on canvas, the stories artists paint remain consistent across mediums. We are finding that the smooth quality of the Perspex and the different application options are

giving some artists more mobility to create detail in new ways, different aspects and details of stories they paint are emerging in some artists work.

DRS: What were artists hoping for and looking forward to with this workshop?

BC: Artists have enjoyed being together in focused workshops and having the enthusiastic energy of Emilia Galatis to entertain them. There has been plenty of laughing and dancing as well as fantastic art production, we were all excited to get Emilia back in for a second round of workshops this month.

DRS: How is the second workshop differing from the first?

BC: The first workshop was really an experimental process with the Perspex itself and the results were stunning, artists started to experiment with paint pen in the first round and solid colour backings. This second workshop is seeing a lot more experimentation with paint mediums on the Perspex as the artists are getting more aware of how the Perspex presents. There are some exciting combinations of acrylic and pens and background applications. We are also looking further into ways to present the works.

DRS: Will the artists continue painting on Perspex?

BC: While artists are enjoying it and we have some great opportunities opening up to show case these works on Perspex we will continue to develop this medium, we have had such great success so far!



*(L to R): Lisa Uhl working with pink on Perspex. Lisa Uhl, Tjutujarti, 2017 60x90cm
© Mangkaja Arts 2017*

DRS: What has the audience response been to the works so far?

BC: We are getting some fantastic responses from the works produced, with many enquiries already and the recent show 'Mangkaja Waters' at Short St Gallery in Broome proved very, very popular. Plus with the Telstra finalist piece for Nada Rawlins and lining up potential shows with our international partners, we are thrilled by the response so far.



Image credits: (L to R) Freedom Garvey teaching Tarisha Mouda and Maria Fredericks © Clare Wood 2017. Group photo of Maria Fredericks, Ana Bundamurra, Caitlyn Djanghara, Esther Waina and Maria Maraltadj at Kalumburu Mission © Freedom Garvey 2017. Zerika Clement and Justina Clement reviewing photos. © Clare Wood 2017

Focus on; Kalumburu Photography

In the last edition of the DRS Newsletter we interviewed Broome based photographer Michael Jalaru Torres about his thoughts on photography and its versatility as an art form. Firmly believing the medium to be an important platform to communicate culture, he said ‘I think we can use it to capture a broad range of stories, capturing our people on country... I think if we can capture images it gives a lot more range for people to record.’ Sharing this same spirit of cultural pride and enthusiasm for new photographic possibilities a group of women in the far northern Kimberley community of Kalumburu have begun their own photography project born of aspirations to develop their own micro-enterprise.

The Kalumburu Tramulla Strong Women’s group is a volunteer group who proactively seek to empower the community through knowledge, and economic and social change. This group of women are widely regarded as strong in principle and culture. Meeting regularly to talk about social concerns impacting their community, the group is always on the lookout for ways to implement local action for young people to have meaningful engagement. The group gets involved with suicide prevention, creating opportunities for learning, pathways to employment and the revival of traditional knowledge and culture.

The group reached out to Clare Wood, inviting her to talk with the women about their enterprise ideas and ambitions. Wood, a trusted figure, having previously worked in Kalumburu for some time on mental health projects, brought with her experience in enterprise development work around cultural tourism and arts. Wood then got Enterprise Learning Projects (ELP) involved. The partnership made sense, started in 2010 and based in Katherine, Enterprise Learning Projects support micro-enterprise development for ideas embedded in Aboriginal culture in remote communities, predominantly in the Northern Territory. Put simply, ELP operates by mapping a community group or individual’s hopes and dreams and then goes about seeking grants, philanthropic support or crowd funding to make it possible.

Initially the Tramulla group’s focus was to set-up an op shop, as ELP had already experienced success with these in remote places. However, after further discussions it emerged that there were a couple of women in particular who were very keen to learn photography skills and from this build some sort of sustainable, self-determined enterprise. In this vein, from artistic aspirations alongside a desire for practical development, funding was acquired from the Olympus Vision Project with ELP’s assistance and the Kalumburu photography project was born. Over two sessions beginning in February and ending in May 2017 workshops took place in Kalumburu and were co-facilitated by Wood and

professional photographer Freedom Garvey. Proving popular with community members participation grew over the span of the project with over 20 women getting involved in total.

The workshops commenced with Garvey sharing the story of how she became a photographer and business woman with the participants. Having never met a professional photographer, they were intrigued as much by Garvey's photographs as by the pathway to employment and business that photography might afford. As further inspiration participants were also shown examples of work by successful Indigenous photographers such as Wayne Quilliam. Some of the women came to the program with prior experience in painting, however the majority of the group were not artists and still demonstrated a critical eye - intuitively noticing details, making relevant observations and asking pointed questions about the sample photographs presented. As observed by Wood, 'some women noticed how Garvey used reflections in her photos and that afternoon some women practiced using reflections in the water in their own photography.'

After initial instruction on camera handling and the technical aspects of lighting, ISO, depth of field, perspective and focal points, the participants were eager to get out and start taking photos straight away. Despite some of the women never having picked up a manual camera before, they quickly demonstrated that they required minimal instruction on composition and subject matter. As Wood describes it, 'on the first day we went out in the troopy and with eight loan cameras from Olympus, as soon as we unloaded people just dispersed on country, the women were confident with finding, composing and creating images without guidance. It was quite amazing actually to see the strength of the composition of the shots and how they photographed their own country.'



Red rocks/wet season water by Maria Fredericks © Maria Fredericks 2017

The participants were keen to suggest locations for the shoots which Wood and Garvey then facilitated. Despite sometimes challenging logistics and at one point almost getting the troopy bogged, the group set out to iconic historical locations including the war planes wrecks and the Mission. The participants were especially excited about shooting at places with personal significance, such as beaches and bush blocks with connections to memories of family. As Wood described, 'it was so beautiful, that strength and pride of wanting to show and share where they're from.'

With the workshops taking place at the tail end of the wet season, the dramatic weather conditions and environment around Kalumburu informed the subject matter in a number of ways; the impressive sunsets, storm clouds and lightning presented opportunities to experiment in low light with exposure and shutter speed. Due to the heat some women stood with their feet in the cool water of the streams, experimenting with taking close ups of the water and the many colourful flowering plants and insects flourishing there.

A number of participants stood out in their eagerness to learn, attending all the morning and afternoon workshops, demonstrating commitment by following through with honing additional computer skills around record cataloguing and data back-up. Justina Clement and Zerika Clement attentively soaked-up as much knowledge from Garvey as possible and were keen to know more about experimenting with bigger zooms. Tarisha Mouda got up before dawn, enthusiastic to get to the river with Wood and Garvey to set-up the tripod, adjust the right settings and wait for the light to be perfect before capturing the desired images. Many participants made good use of the loan cameras by practising on their own in between workshops.



Sunset at McGowan Beach by Maria Maraltadj © Maria Maraltadj 2017

During the second workshop the subject matter steered towards portraiture with the training including specific techniques for framing, even lighting, backgrounds and colour contrasting. The participants, keen on representing the uniqueness of life in Kalumburu, pounced on locals paparazzi-style at the mission, the shop and men's work shed. Working their way down the 'Kalumburu Boulevard' they enticed more willing subjects, the community coming out and responding well to this rare occasion of locals taking photos of locals and the opportunity to have impromptu family portraits. Striking photos were taken in a mood of great fun, with behind-the-scenes shots also captured by Maria Maraltadj who chose to capture moments outside the shop and during family portraits.



Artist Gwen Clarke by Maria Maraltadj © Maria Maraltadj 2017

As the last workshop drew to a close it was clear that participants were becoming more experimental with their approach. According to Wood, 'people were being more artistic with light and slightly blurred images and textures and what they were taking photos of.' After the shooting on location was over, the mood was exuberant, and participants were rewarded with the immediate feedback that reviewing the beautiful photos afforded. A highlight involved the women each choosing one of their photos to share with everyone, composing a short summary about why they took it and then viewing the slideshow together. According to Wood, Garvey and Women's Centre coordinator Fi Sproule were moved to tears by this and immensely impressed by the quality of the images and skill of the participants resulting from such a short yet intensive program.

The obvious advantages of nurturing culture and skill-building aside, the longer term benefits of growth through commercial opportunities this project offers is exciting. During the workshops Wood and Garvey introduced ways photography skills could be used in business and shared product concepts, brainstorming with participants ideas such as taking family portraits for the local market, and selling postcards, calendars and framed prints to retailers and tourists over the dry season. There seemed to be popular consensus around two community-driven products - fine art prints and calendars. Inspired by pride of country and culture some were very keen to focus on artistic development, concerning themselves with fine art prints. Calendar production was driven by a desire to showcase Kalumburu's uniqueness and to fill a noticeable hole in the market. With Kalumburu receiving multiple tourists every year and having no specific merchandise to sell aside from generic Kimberley souvenirs, there is strong interest from the community for a calendar. It's also something that community members themselves would want to buy. Participant Tarisha Mouda said, 'I'd like to make a calendar to express something about Kalumburu, to show my kids what I've done and make them little bit proud about what I've done.'

Aside from hoping to sell locally at the Community shop, Wood is also helping the women to find retail stockists across the Kimberley and in the cruise ship market. ELP is developing a website for the Kalumburu photographers and soon people will be able to view a gallery of the photos and purchase on the recently launched ELP online shop, www.yunmi.com.au, which is promoting businesses and selling products by remote Aboriginal entrepreneurs.

Another opportunity for the Kalumburu photographers facilitated by Wood via ELP is an upcoming paid contract for a fashion photo-shoot with clothing brand Magpie Goose. The brief includes photographing models showcasing the new clothing range made from Indigenous textiles, and has been conceived to inspire and inform the women about contract photography work with a view to opening up opportunities recording other events in Kalumburu. As Wood states, 'it's about how they can be their own storytellers.'

In an early effort to seek exposure and recognition a few of the women have been entering Kimberley photographic awards, with Tarisha Mouda managing to make it into the top ten of the annual Kimberley Echo photography prize in 2016. Esther Waina in particular is focused on breaking into the fine art market and dreams of ultimately having her works exhibited in galleries. For now however, with the recent intensive workshops behind them they already have enough quality work to kick-start sales. Olympus have provided two camera kits to remain at the women's centre for the group to continue to use and ELP are currently applying for further funding for future workshops. Wood enthuses, 'It's been a lovely project to be involved in and I think it has so much potential to keep growing, it's great.'



© ELP Photo by Zevila Clement © Zevila Clement 2017

Many thanks to Clare Wood, the Kalumburu Tramulla Strong Women's group and the photography project participants for images and assistance with this article. Wood would also like to acknowledge the following supporting partners not mentioned above: The Kalumburu Strong Women's Centre for providing the venue, Community Focus National for providing the vehicle and Australia Post Neighbourhood for covering the printing costs associated with first run of art prints and calendars.

For more information on Enterprise Learning Projects go to www.elp.org.au or contact Clare Wood on E: clare@elp.org.au



Image credits: (L to R) Peggy Griffiths working with new techniques, Jan and Peggy Griffiths with JamFactory ceramic trainer Gus Clutterback. Works in progress during the residency.
© Waringarri Arts 2017

Ceramics Residency at JamFactory for Waringarri Arts Artists Peggy Griffiths & Jan Griffiths

The relationship between Waringarri Aboriginal Arts (WAA) in Kununurra and JamFactory in South Australia began in early 2016 when the art centre engaged JamFactory facilitators Gus Clutterback and Sylvia Nevisic to deliver ceramics and jewellery workshops to artists in the Waringarri studio.

JamFactory is a not-for-profit organisation which supports and promotes design and craftsmanship, providing skills and business training for artists and designers. With locations in Adelaide and Seppeltsfield in the Barossa, it incorporates retail spaces and purpose-built studios for ceramics, glass, furniture and metal design, where individual studios are able to be tenanted by artists.

After the success of the initial April 2016 workshops in Kununurra, follow-up workshops continued with ceramicist Gus Clutterback, who developed a strong relationship with the artists at Waringarri art centre. The JamFactory residency came about after Peggy Griffiths was awarded a DCA Creative Development Fellowship, it made sense to continue her work with Gus to develop her arts practice in ceramics and to broker an opportunity for Peggy along with her daughter Jan to visit the JamFactory studios and avail themselves of the state of the art facilities.

Working with ceramics is a new choice of medium for both Peggy and Jan Griffiths, indeed with Jan having only tried her hand at it for the very first time in 2016. Peggy had worked with ceramics once before, many years ago on a trip to Darwin with other Waringarri artists and her friend, the now deceased Daisy Bitting, where they undertook workshops in printing and ceramics at Charles Darwin University. Remembering that experience and presented again with the opportunity to work with clay in the Waringarri studio, Peggy decided she wanted to have another go at it and asked her daughter Jan if she was interested in joining in, which in turn inspired Jan to give it a try.

Peggy is one of Waringarri Art's most senior, consistent and dedicated artists. Committed to her arts practise and cultural responsibilities, she has always demonstrated ardent support for the art centre and so it comes as no surprise that her reasoning for this most recent involvement was driven by, in her words; 'learning new things... it helps the art centre with new ideas.' And again, when asked what she was hoping for and looking forward to the most about the JamFactory residency her response; 'We were looking forward to it so that we could learn and bring ideas back to Waringarri Arts'.



*(L to R) Jan & Peggy in the Jam Factory ceramic workshop, Peggy feeling the clay, and sculptures ready for firing.
© Waringarri Arts 2017*

Before attending the workshop in Adelaide, Peggy and Jan did a bit of research, examining work by other ceramic artists in recent exhibitions in Sydney including 'Clay Stories; Contemporary Indigenous Ceramics from Remote Australia' at Sabbia Gallery and 'Water Objects – Echoes' at Cross Arts Projects. However, both artists were resolute in the belief that what they saw was completely different to what they were trying to do.

And so, in April, rugged-up for the cold and excited about what was to come, the pair flew to Adelaide. The residency got underway with an exploratory visit to The Pug Mill, a ceramic and pottery supplier of glazes, stains, slips, tools, equipment and bisque ware where Peggy & Jan perused the range of materials available and considered possibilities. After being introduced to JamFactory facilitators and touring the studios, both Peggy and Jan were impressed by the layout and what they saw, and were especially taken by the glass making, which they both found fascinating. In the ceramics studio they were particularly interested in the numerous glazing techniques offering various outcomes that were available.

Peggy and Jan began by painting designs onto large pre-prepared platters and bowls, which Peggy in particular enjoyed, and from there they worked up to developing sculptural pieces. As Jan accounts; 'I felt doing plates wasn't the right for thing for me. I like doing 3D – making sculptures and figurines. When I started making figurines I had so many ideas. The clay just kind of showed me what it wanted to be.'



(L to R) Peggy painting platter and the finished (unfired) work. © Waringarri Arts 2017

Jan's first foray into ceramics in 2016 immediately caught the eye of fellow artists and staff at Waringarri Arts. Her unique artistic approach and choice of subject matter was further validated when works were selected for inclusion in the Revealed 2017 exhibition at Fremantle Arts Centre. 'For me it was a learning experience. It was the first time for me to work with ceramics and show other people. My ceramic sculptures were a story that was dedicated to my grandmother and her sister and to my uncle who was part of the stolen generation and someone our family lost. These sculptures are also dedicated to all the Stolen Generations people across Australia.' Another significant piece by Jan included in her Revealed installation was a life-size coolamon, she explains; 'I learnt to make the coolamon by slumping a slab of clay and then after that - after looking at the clay for a while the bush foods was what came to me.'



(L to R) Platter, sculpture and coolamon installation by Jan Griffiths in the 2017 Revealed exhibition at Fremantle Art Centre. © Waringarri Arts 2017

During the course of the JamFactory residency, both artists experimented more with the clay than ever before, learning new glazing techniques, sgraffito and making different shapes. Peggy particularly liked the big roller they had for mixing and making slabs of clay and according to Jan, 'I learnt a lot more about making figurines – faces, hands and shaping people.' Neither artist struggled with any real or perceived pressure to produce during the residency, a true professional, Peggy brushed off the question of whether it was difficult to find inspiration, saying 'The more you do, the more ideas come to you.' And Jan's diligent approach saw her rise above the limited time pressure, 'My diary of ideas helps me. I do drawings and make notes about what I have been learning.'

As the residency progressed, both Jan and Peggy developed similar interest in new sculptural forms yet distinctly conveyed different approaches to subject matter. Known for paintings depicting the winding waterways, billabongs, hills, ant pits, spinifex and grass plains of her traditional country, Peggy's subject matter of choice to depict while working with ceramic was, as she puts it, 'My country.' Notably, Peggy chose to emphasize the hills of her country in sculptural form, for example her Jalin Hill sculpture – 'Jalin Hill is showing my country.' She steadfastly proclaims that 'Doing it in ceramics is the same as painting... it is the same way of storytelling as we do with our paintings. We are just using ceramics to tell the story.'



(L to R) Assortment of landscape sculptures by Peggy Griffiths, Peggy at work, and Jalin Hill sculpture © Waringarri Arts 2017

Jan agrees, 'We are telling the same stories, sometimes just translating the same images from painting to ceramics.' Jan especially enjoyed the process of shaping the clay into figurines, 'I look at the clay for a while until I get the feeling of what it wants to be.' In terms of subject matter; 'I am taking my Dad's paintings and making them into ceramics.' Jan's father, Alan Griffiths, is well known for his paintings that portray representations of country as well as his more light-hearted figurative paintings, characterised by small naïve style figures depicting cultural stories, corroborees and station life including cattle mustering and camel treks. As demonstrated by the performance group she made during the residency, in an effort to celebrate culture, understand and pass on family stories, Jan claims she is learning to translate her dad's stories via her figurines; 'These figures are telling the stories from my dad's painting and are a way for me to be learning these stories.'



(L to R) Warrior by Jan Griffiths, Jan's performance group sculpture in the making, and finished (unfired) work. © Waringarri Arts 2017

It's fair to say that both Peggy and Jan gained a lot from their experience at JamFactory and that new ceramic development now coming from Waringarri Arts will be worth keeping an eye on. Cathy Cummins, Waringarri Arts Manager, who accompanied Peggy & Jan for their first week enthused, 'It was so wonderful to be in such a creatively inspiring place! Peggy and Jan seemed to really enjoy their time and have learnt a lot of new techniques as well as creating a number of beautiful works.'

The Jam Factory has invited Peggy to exhibit in their Collect Gallery during this year's Tarnathi Festival of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art in October. The exhibition, a multi-media first for Peggy, will feature Peggy's ochre on canvas paintings alongside a selection of the new ceramic sculptural pieces, painted platters and bowls. Jan will also be included in the show with an adjoining selection of her work.

When collectively asked if they will continue making ceramics both Peggy and Jan respond with a resounding 'Yes'. However, when prompted to reveal what she plans for future ceramic making and the upcoming show, Peggy only fuels curiosity and anticipation, not giving anything away, she teasingly says with a big grin; 'You will have to wait and see!'

To keep abreast with new ceramic artwork developments be sure to follow the Waringarri Arts social media channels and check out their website www.waringarriarts.com.au

Many thanks to Peggy and Jan Griffiths and Cathy Cummins for supplying the photos and for their contribution to this article.

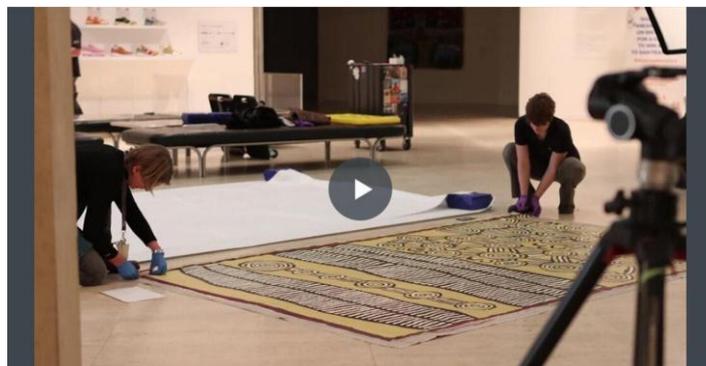
AGWA Digitisation of Aboriginal Art in WA State Art Collection

In an effort to promote and celebrate the remarkable Aboriginal art of the Kimberley, Desert River Sea offers audiences digital access to images of Kimberley Aboriginal art from the holdings of the WA State Art Collection. We hope that exhibiting this rich resource of works in this way will promote appreciation, research as well as discussion about the future of the collection.

[AGWA's collection of Kimberley Aboriginal artworks](#) include representations from right across the region and currently numbers more than 400. Comprised of artifacts, historical and contemporary works of art – each documents the rich visual languages and traditions of the region's Indigenous peoples, while highlighting and celebrating the emergence of significant art movements within the region over the last 40 years. The collection is constantly growing and as an ongoing process we are continually updating State Art Collection records to the Desert River Sea website, there are currently 429 images of Kimberley State Art Collection works on the site, you can explore them [here](#).

Some of the celebrated artists represented within the collection include; Paddy Bedford, Hughie Bent, Jan Billycan, Jack Britten, Paddy Jaminji, Lily Karadada, Queenie McKenzie, Alec Mingelmanganu, Eubena Nampitjin, Butcher Joe Nangan, Peter Newry, Lena Nyadbi, Jimmy Pike, Wakartu Cory Surprise, Rover Thomas, Roy Wiggan and Daniel Walbidi.

Part of the gallery's current major Indigenous project *Six Seasons*, is the ambitious plan to digitise the entire Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art collection. Photographing works in the collection can be quite involved and require the coordinated assistance of multiple curators, registrars and conservation staff. The following time lapse video shows the behind the scenes activity of the recent recording of artwork *Marrapinti* by Nancy Nungurray (2001, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 1830 x 3027 mm)





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