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Dear Friends,

Here is the latest Kimberley art news from Broome - Enjoy!

Philippa & Geraldine



Image credit: (L to R) Mabel Juli painting at Warmun Art Centre, October 2014 © AGWA Mabel Juli, *Garnkinny du Wardel du Lalanggarrany du Darndal (The moon and the star, the crocodile and the turtle)* 2012 © Mabel Juli. Image courtesy of Warmun Art Centre.

Warmun Landscape Painting and the *Ngarranggarniny* of Mabel Juli By Dr. Darren Jorgensen

In the Gija language, *Ngarranggarniny* describes the moment at which the Dreaming ancestors lay down to become the landscape of the East Kimberley, and the way that this laying down recurs eternally in the minds of the living. *Ngarranggarniny* is a different word to *Ngarranggarni*, that instead ends with an *i*, and describes the archaic Dreamtime, events of long ago. The emphasis of Mabel Juli's paintings is on the *Ngarranggarniny*, the laying down that is a psychic suspension in the land. So that the Dreaming woman *Ginngennayn* becomes *Ginngennayn Hill* as she turns to look at her dog, while *Goolarbool*, the rainbow serpent, disappears into the land as a shimmer,

and *Karnginy* steps into the sky as the moon. The drama of this moment of the Dreaming is ongoing, as today the Kimberley confronts a new Dreamtime of agriculture and mining that once again is changing the laws of time and space and transforming the country in its wake.

Juli's determination to picture Dreaming beings like *Ginnennayn* and *Karnginy* represents a very different strategy to the one commonly employed by her fellow artists at Warmun. Most painters here follow the example of Rover Thomas who made Warmun, then called Turkey Creek, famous through his landscape paintings. Yet Thomas's success came from painting landscapes rather than Dreaming beings, and it was left to his less well known collaborator Paddy Jaminji to illustrate the Devil Devils *Jimpi* and *Manginta* who were guides for the *Goorirr Goorirr (Kuirr Kuirr)* ceremony that Thomas had received in feverish dreams.^[i] They peer at us from Jaminji's paintings, just as we can see the Dreaming beings *Ginnennayn*, *Goolarbool* and *Karnginy* in Juli's *Ngarranggarniny* landscapes.

While *Jimpi* and *Manginta* travel far through the air and over the land, for Juli such airy Dreamings are represented by Christian themes, in such paintings as *The Holy Spirit* (2007) that show a great white dove descending to greet a group of worshippers. Mostly, however, Dreaming beings are embedded in the land or follow fixed orbits in the sky. Jaminji's *The Dreaming Kangaroo at Nine Mile, near Wyndham* (1983) and *Tawurr the Kangaroo at Kanmanturr* (1984) are inscribed on the rocks at Nine Mile and *Kanmanturr*, while Juli's paintings of *Karnginy* are of the moon who in the *Ngarranggarniny* stepped into the sky. He fell in love with *Darwool*, Snake Woman, but because she was wrong skin she could not marry her. Juli sings the story:

He was angry with them and walked away, to the top of a hill. There he said to them: 'You mob will all die, but I will come back alive.' He turned into the moon. That two promised ones, *nyawana*, turned into *wardul*, the evening and morning stars.^[ii]

So it is that Juli paints not only this moment of the *Ngarranggarniny*, but the ambiguous place of the Dreaming beings in their own stories. While it is tempting to turn these stories into moral narratives, to say as the artist does that 'the full moon is a reminder to all Gija people to respect the rules - "right way marriage"', here the transgressor also becomes a powerful Dreaming being who eluded death.^[iii] The woman *Ginnennayn* exists in this state of suspension but through no fault of her own. She has been looking for her dog, and hearing it growl she looks over her shoulder, to become the shape of *Ginnennayn Hill*. Structured like a Zen koan, *Ginnennayn's* place in the land is one that remains tied to what the anthropologist W.E.H. Stanner called the 'everywhen', an infrastructure of the country that also describes Gija consciousness itself.^[iv]



Mabel Juli, *Garnkiny Ngarranggarni* 2010 © Mabel Juli. Image courtesy of Warmun Art Centre

Some of Juli's landscapes are not painted for their significance in the *Ngarranggarniny*, but for their significance in her own life. These works include paintings of Warmun itself, and a painting of *Young Wumbi and the Crocodile* (1998), depicting her grandson turning up to a *Goorirr* *Goorirr* performance with a freshwater crocodile that he had killed slung over his back. Even with these secular themes Juli is able to turn them into enigmatic shapes, stark and clear conceptualisations in ochre. In this, Juli is a surrealist, as she turns the everyday into the uncanny. As Joan Miro brought the qualities of the unconscious to abstract, organic shapes, so Juli turns the contours of Gija country, its *gawarre* (ranges of steep hills) and *ngarriny* (hillocks), into mindscapes. As Max Ernst stylized birds to fold in on themselves like spectral hallucinations, so Juli shows us the way that *Gingennayn Hill* is peering back upon us. Like Jaminji, she is able to render the lifeworld around her into the strange shapes of the 'magnicanny', a term that combines magnitude with the canny, the sublime with the familiar. For while aesthetics after Kant and Freud grappled with the sublime and uncanny, Juli turns these concepts around by making the immense a part of what is familiar. While *Gingennayn Hill* is a spectacular rocky rise, it is also a place within which the *Ngarranggarni* beings of Juli's unconscious reside, impressing itself upon her mind and spirit. Or in a painting of *Goolarbool*, Juli illustrates the snake disappearing into the landscape as it is being photographed by a young girl. The snake becomes a 'shine', a shimmer that Juli says is a warning to whitefellas not to photograph what they shouldn't.^[v] For Juli's Dreaming is historical rather than mythical, as she turns the *Ngarranggarni* of the deep past, the archaic time of the Dreaming, into this ever present poignancy of the *Ngarranggarniny*.

This is what Henry F. Skerritt describes, after Edouard Glissant, as a decolonising strategy in which colonised people enter into 'Relation' with the coloniser.^[vi] While being defined by the coloniser as Other, the colonised artist works to open an inter-subjective space of difference, and to articulate this difference not as an opposition but as a part of a multiplicity of differences. So that Juli paints very precise differences at work in the landscape, the differences of *Gingennayn* at *Gingennayn Hill*, and *Goolarbool* on Springvale Station. The distinct history of the Kimberley lends itself to Juli's enchantment of the landscape. For in this region the first invaders were pastoralists who largely took the law in their own hands, giving rise to a landscape of fear. Amidst the brutality of the 'Killing Times' Aboriginal people from different parts of the region banded together on missions, stations and on the outskirts of new towns. So it is that the Kimberley remains a cosmopolitan place even today, as people with different languages, ceremonial cultures and working lives negotiate their place alongside each other and incorporate each other's differences.

As the *Goorirr* *Goorirr* and other dances staged what Glissant calls a 'unity-diversity' between different groups living across the Kimberley, so Juli articulates a 'definite quantity' of difference by which she enters into 'Relation' with the world created by colonialism.^[vii] She envisages the haunted dimensions of the land, and the spiritual infrastructure by which the country remains the province of Dreaming beings. Simmering within the spectacular *ngaarriny* and *gawarre* of the Kimberley lie the energies of what for outsiders remains an unknown continent, that suspends within itself powers whose majesty can be glimpsed but briefly, from the corner of the eye, in the *Ngarranggarniny*. In this Juli overturns the naturalism of the Warmun landscape school, and instead turns the Kimberley into a playground of the Dreaming imagination, ordering its shapes into the infrastructure of the Dreaming mind



Mabel Juli, *Garnkiny du Wardel du Lalanggarrany du Darndal* (*The moon and the star, the crocodile and the turtle*) 2012 © Mabel Juli. Image courtesy of Warmun Art Centre

[i] See Will Christensen, 'Paddy Jaminji and the *Guirr Guirr*' in Judith Ryan with Kim Akerman (eds), *Images of Power: Aboriginal Art of the Kimberley*, exhibition catalogue, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 1993, pp. 32-35 at 32-33.

[ii] Cited in Mayke Kranenbarg, 'Painting Authenticity: Aboriginal art and knowledge in an intercultural space (Warmun, Western Australia)', Master of Arts thesis, University of Nijmegen, June 2004, p. 36.

[iii] See Kranenbarg, p. 36.

[iv] W.E.H. Stanner, 'The Dreaming' in William A. Lessa and E.Z. Vogt (eds), *Reader in Comparative Religion: An anthropological approach*, Row, Peterson and Co., New York, 1958, pp. 512-23 at 514.

[v] This is documented in Kranenbarg, p. 47.

[vi] Henry F. Skerritt, 'Strange Relatives: Negotiating the borderlines in East Kimberley painting', in *Crossing Cultures: The Owen and Wagner Collection of Contemporary Australian Aboriginal Art at the Hood Museum of Art*, ed. Stephen Gilchrist, Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College, Hanover, U.S., pp. 93-103 at 94.

[vii] See Skerritt, p. 94.



Image Credits: (L to R) Vincent Bear at work with watercolour at Mowanjum. Barry Nuggett at Mangkaja Arts. Mary Teresa Taylor in the Kira Kiro studio. Janet Dreamer at work in the Yarliyil studio © AGWA Alan Griffiths at the 2015 State Living Treasures Award ceremony © Waringarri Aboriginal Arts

In Conversation – new artist stories

We have just recently launched a new sub-section of the Desert River Sea website dedicated to short articles generated by the DRS Broome team born from conversations with Kimberley artists. [‘In Conversation- artist focus stories’](#) accessed via the Research tab is currently populated with short insights into a diverse variety of artists including Alan Griffiths, Mary Teresa Taylor, Vincent Bear, Janet Dreamer and Barry Nuggett and will be a place for introductions, life stories and viewpoints. We hope readers enjoy the unexpected deviations in these more personal contributions.

See below for an example focus piece on Mangkaja artist Barry Nuggett:

Barry Ngiyari Nuggett



Barry Nuggett 2016

Mangkaja art centre in Fitzroy Crossing this year welcomed another experienced artist to their midst; Walmajarri man Barry Nuggett. Since the arrival of studio coordinator and artist Wes Maselli in 2014, the men of Mangkaja have strengthened and extended their practice to an exciting degree, and several newcomers have swelled the ranks of those working daily in the hot hive of activity that is the art centre back verandah.

Barry grew up on Gogo Station just south of Fitzroy Crossing. At fourteen he moved to Fitzroy Crossing and then to Perth for one year for high school. His own art practice has been life-long, but

didn't arise in a vacuum. Similar to many Mangkaja artists, he has close family ties with senior artists and cultural leaders who were instrumental not only in establishing the success of this particular art centre, but maintaining the cultural strength of the various groups who came to live in Fitzroy Crossing in diaspora from desert country and elsewhere. His mother is senior artist Amy Nuggett. She is one of a core group of older women who have painted with Mangkaja art centre for many years – as did her mother Walka Molly Rogers, uncle Pijaju Peter Skipper and Kurntika Jimmy Pike, all of whom were born to a traditional life in the Great Sandy Desert before moving to station country in the mid-1950s.

Barry now lives at Bayulu, a community of around three hundred people just fifteen kilometres from Fitzroy Crossing. He has been engaged in art-making since his school days. As a child he loved comics, particularly those featuring superheroes and cowboys and Indians, and says he learnt how to sketch the human figure by studying these closely. During high school he discovered the central Australian painters of the Hermannsburg School and was greatly inspired by their work, particularly their use of colour. He too began exploring watercolour and landscapes around this time.

As an adult Barry worked as a stockman on central and east Kimberley cattle stations. The demands of this working life didn't entirely eliminate opportunities for creative visual expression. He describes covering his canvas swag in drawings using pen, pencil, texta or whatever was available. Mostly these were depictions of country, horses and cattle. He says a lot of the stockmen used to do this - they would also draw on their hats, station water tanks, 'anything and everything!'

Most days Barry does his artwork at home. He says he gets up at around 5am to paint - naturalistic landscapes and sometimes acrylics in the now familiar colourful desert idiom of his Walmajarri forebears. He says he paints *jilji* (sand hill) and *jila* (waterhole) country only, ('not the hills of other people's country'), sometimes including the *dinjil* tree. This iconic white-trunked species grows in sand hill country and is good for firewood, medicine and many other purposes.



B. Nuggett, Untitled, 2016

He likes experimenting with different materials and techniques – *Puluwala* (above), representing a recent shift in style, had salt added to it for texture for example, and he has taught himself lino-printing. After watching televised Anh Do's portraiture series, he also completed a self-portrait. He enjoys exposure to other artists' work, but given the lack of ready access to this from the centre of the

Kimberley he relies on art and photography magazines when seeking inspiration beyond his immediate environment and own cultural milieu.

Afternoons are set aside for working with wood, carving boab nuts and making objects such as boomerangs in the 'proper' (traditional) way. In his youth he would watch his father Janjiny paint boomerangs, shields and other tools and ceremonial pieces, and when making these objects himself now he draws partly on skills he acquired through observing the older men.



B. Nuggett, *River*, 2016, 60 x 60cm, etching on metal. Photo courtesy Mangkaja Art Centre.

Barry started going to Mangkaja this year for the first time. He says he really enjoys sitting and working with the other men out the back of the studio/gallery space. As he says, he's 'family for everybody there', or at least those from the desert side [\[1\]](#). An engaging conversationalist, he's also happy to talk to visitors to the art centre. He says he's accustomed to lots of people around at home and can stay focused on his work easily.

Whilst he has started experimenting with abstract acrylic paintings most of the small body of work Barry has produced thus far at the art centre is comprised, not surprisingly, of incised painted metal panels. This is a technique developed recently by the men at the art centre as a deliberate strategy to extend their traditional carving skills into a more contemporary medium. He immediately produced figurative work clearly evidencing his skills in this area; finely etched depictions of *parlka* (barramundi), other freshwater fish, boab nuts and plants, distillations of the visual character of each form.

Barry's love of the natural environment is evident not only in his artwork but also his conversation. His eyes light up as he tells of catching barramundi and the fight they put up when caught – but also of the pleasure in giving the fish away to others during Sorry Time, the mourning period when desert people follow the traditional restrictions on meat-eating and must eat fish instead.



B. Nuggett, *Parlka*, 2016, 80 x 40cm etching on metal. Photo courtesy Mangkaja Art Centre.

Art-making in remote communities is not by any means linked solely to economic activity. There are recognised social, health and educational benefits which often result from artists' own initiatives. Similar to many others Barry has found ways his artwork can be used for community benefit. He recently illustrated a Healthy Eating cookbook and has worked with Bayulu children on art projects such as mural painting for NAIDOC week. He also volunteers with the Ngurrara Rangers ('for Walmajarri side'). Aside from getting out on country this also enable him to get photos of the landscape, plants and animals as reference for his artwork.

Unusually, Barry maintains a collection of his work at home, both folders of paintings and carved pieces, which he takes with him when he gives talks at schools. He sells his work through the art centre now though; as he says, 'I got older and wiser and decided I'd rather sell it for the right price and with the right respect'.

Written in conversation with Barry Nuggett at Mangkaja Art Centre.

[1] Mangkaja art centre membership is principally members from the four major language which now comprise the township of Fitzroy Crossing: the people of the river country – Gooniyandi and Bunuba, and the sand hill people of the great Sandy Desert – Walmajarri and Wangkajungka.



Image Credits: (L to R) Betty Bundamurra, Spring is Near 2015, Ochre on canvas, 800 x 1400mm © Waringarri Aboriginal Arts. Betty Bundamurra standing next to two of her artworks on display at the inaugural DRS visual arts leadership program exhibition, Kununurra 2016 © AGWA

Feature Artwork - Betty Bundamurra, *Spring is near*

Each issue we invite art centres to suggest artworks to highlight. This edition Kira Kiro Art Centre in Kalumburu presents *Spring is near*, by Betty Bundamurra.

In the seven short years since the beginning of the Kalumburu art centre Betty Bundamurra has deepened her art practice to the point where she is now one of the senior artists and, as an arts worker, is also responsible for many of the daily operations of the studio. Frequently experimenting with personal interpretations of local rock art, her work is bold and stylistically incomparable to any other artist of the Kimberley region.

Betty's description of 'Spring is Near' follows:

Wandjina has watered the earth. The rivers, pools, waterfalls and creeks are teeming with wildlife. Birds and animals frequently visit these places. The water comes to life with fishes, tortoises and fresh water crocodiles swimming by. The Kira Kiros are happy spirits that assist the Wandjina in looking after the land. They are happy spirits whose feet never touch the ground. They are warriors who like to do traditional dances about the journey they have been on and the day's hunt.

For enquiries about this and other artworks by Betty Bundamurra please contact Kira Kiro via Waringarri Arts on (08) 9192 2212 www.waringarriarts.com.au

For more information on Betty Bundamurra and her artworks including a short video, click [here](#)



Image credit: (L to R) Close-up of Kirsty Burgu combining ink drawing with watercolour. Karen Morgan demonstrating watercolour techniques to Kirsty Burgu, Leah Umbagai, Donny Woolagoodja and Cessa Bani. ©

AGWA 2016

Mowanjum Watercolour Workshop

The artists of Mowanjum Art Centre in Derby are known best for their interpretations of the north-west Kimberley rock art for which they, the Ngarinyin, Worrora and Wunambal people, are the custodians. For many years painters have preferred to use earth-toned acrylic, processed pigments and natural ochres and now this is something the market overwhelmingly expects. But increasingly artists are voicing a desire to be more experimental.

Across two days in August Desert River Sea facilitated a workshop on watercolour techniques and materials. This was organised in response to a conversation with interim manager Leah Umbagai, who had volunteered that several artists in Derby worked with this medium by preference and that others, particularly Worrora painter Donny Woolagoodja, were keen to learn. Upon making a few enquiries we discovered that long-term art tutor Karen Morgan was in Broome and keen to be involved so, along with the enthusiastic support of Mowanjum staff, the workshop was brought together at relatively short notice.

A number of participants arrived on the first day; young ones alongside senior artists and even Mowanjum staff members crowded the studio. The morning began with a slideshow of early Aboriginal watercolour paintings from the west Kimberley and elsewhere in Australia. Numbers increased on the second day once word had spread, with others drifting in to watch others at work. One artist already had considerable experience in the medium, having taught himself to paint in his twenties: Vincent (Vinnie) Bear quietly demonstrated his skill in landscape painting to the group, but was also very keen to pick up new techniques. The occasional 'Holy catfish, that's it!' emanated from his end of the worktable when he acquired a thus far elusive trick. He also appeared on the second day with new paintings completed at home the night before and proudly presented one to the tutor as a gift.

Not surprisingly, senior artist Donny Woolagoodja set about confidently painting an abstracted landscape scene as if he'd used watercolour every day. The experience and talent of the Mowanjum artists were demonstrated by the speed with which they picked up the new techniques, so different to those needed for acrylic painting. Initially tasked with depicting the same subject matter, each

participant produced work marked by a distinct individual style and some of the results could easily have been placed in the art centre gallery for sale.

Long-term Mowanjum staff member and artist Kirsty Burgu has a history of embracing new media and experimenting in her arts practice and confidently began combining watercolour and ink drawing. Leah Umbagai took a break from her managerial duties to join the workshop, steadfastly producing five new works, one while bouncing a baby on her hip. She was energized and pleased by progress at the workshop, 'It's been excellent; I really think it's great, it's something different. Dad Vincent is probably the only one who's been working in watercolour, usually we do ochres and acrylic. Working with watercolour gives it that other dimension... with acrylic you can only go so far - with watercolour you can keep working on it, do layers.'

When asked if Mowanjum artists might work with the medium in the future Leah was enthusiastic, 'I'm definitely going to buy watercolour paints for myself and we will buy it for the art centre too now... we do encourage artists as much as possible to use different mediums, we encourage them so that they have a whole range of things to do'. We will certainly be keeping a close eye on new developments here!



Image Credits: (L to R) Vincent Bear at Mowanjum Aboriginal Art & Culture Centre. Close-up of Vincent Bear working on a watercolour landscape. Detail of watercolour by Vincent Bear © AGWA 2016

The bear facts - A conversation with Vincent Bear

Desert River Sea recently held a watercolour workshop at Mowanjum art centre near Derby in the North West Kimberley. Known widely for their ochre and acrylic canvases featuring images and themes from local rock art for which they are the custodians, artists here were keen to extend their painting skills into a new medium. For many it was their first experimentation with these luminous colours and radically different techniques; the brush strokes of one man, however, immediately stood out.

Vincent Bear was born at the erstwhile Derby Native Hospital in 1947 (a period when medical treatment of Aboriginal people of the Kimberley was segregated). He is descended from the Ngarinyin language group on both his mother's and father's side. He lived at Napier Downs station for the first three years of his life. His mother Koko passed away when he two and a year later he moved to

Kimberley Downs station, some 70 kms east of Derby, with his father and stepmother Maisie Bear. Children from Kimberley Downs were bussed to school in Derby, which Vincent attended to year 5. After this he was expected to begin learning station work, a life he committed to until his late 60's. He remembers his first pay as a young adult, about three pounds a month for seasonal work which was without break for about five months of the year. This would have been a little before the introduction of equal wages for Aboriginal pastoral workers in 1968-9, when the decades-long practice of indentured labour in the Kimberley began to be finally extinguished by legislative changes.

The consequences of these early moves for equality were not as positive as expected however. Many workers lost their jobs and the pastoral industry moved away from being labour intensive towards increased mechanisation. In his early twenties Vincent embarked on the first of several trips around Australia, working as he went – a highly unusual step for a young Aboriginal man at that time. As he says himself, he was 'the odd person out'.

He continued this maverick streak by obtaining a bus driver's license and training, with the encouragement and support of the station manager, for a helicopter pilot's license when he was 26, in order to maintain a relevant skill in the swiftly changing pastoral industry. This was partly necessitated by a riding accident when he was 21, when he broke his neck in a fall on Kimberley Downs. After spending eight months in Fremantle Hospital he returned, against medical advice, to riding and stock work.

Vincent married in 1974 and has a number of children including a son who is a musician. He himself is a self-taught guitarist and sings in his own band in Derby. He is the only one in his immediate family who also paints however. In his mid-teens he discovered the work of Albert Namatjira and was so profoundly affected that he determined to teach himself how to paint. He was unable to obtain paints at first so used crayons instead, and says he studied Namatjira prints closely to emulate his techniques.

Vincent isn't the first Aboriginal artist to identify Namatjira as the initial inspiration behind their painting practice. Many of his generation have claimed this – not just for the rare degree of success and positive attention he experienced for a time, but for the powerful depictions of Namatjira's own country and their particular aesthetic appeal. Most commentary on Namatjira centres on his contested impact on mainstream audiences and art history; it would be salutary to consider his effect on Aboriginal artists since the 1940s, and his place within the development of the contemporary Aboriginal art movement since his death in 1959.

Vincent has produced watercolours consistently in the decades since that first discovery. His work is in the western landscape tradition and imbued with a love of the swathe of Kimberley country he knows so intimately from years spent working on cattle stations. Some of these places are not so easily accessible now but Vincent reproduces them referring to photographs or his memory with ease. He also likes to paint scenes from his imagination using a colour palette reminiscent of that used by Namatjira for his luminous central Australian works but more suited to the light quality, vegetation and geology of the north west.

He says he prefers to paint alone, in peace. The paintings he started at the Mowanjum workshop were taken home at night and brought back the next day completed. We were able to observe him apply background washes for earth and sky, then begin mapping out the placement of trees and hills but the final details of the foreground and background were added away from the clamour of the workshop.

Clearly having mastered the particularly style which had so swept him away in his youth we wondered why he had come along to the workshop, but he said there were some techniques he knew had evaded him and wanted to see what additional watercolour secrets the tutor might be able to reveal. Different approaches to rendering clouds, for example, were keenly sought and we periodically heard satisfied exclamations emanating from under his stockman's hat when he easily duplicated a newly demonstrated technique.

Vincent says he takes about seven to nine hours to finish a painting. Occasionally he chooses to sell one but actually much prefers to give them away to friends and others who have shown interest. Indeed he surprised the tutor on the final day with one of his just-completed pieces, which he brought in already framed as a gift. It was a huge pleasure having the chance to learn a little more about him, and interesting to observe the independence he continues to reserve for himself by choosing to paint beyond the reach and hyperbole of the art market.



Image credit: (L to R) On the road to the Lombadina. Prints by Caroline Sibosado on display at the Ardi Festival.

Musical wreck. © AGWA2016

Ardi Festival 2016

Following last year's successful inaugural Ardi Festival, the Lombadina community once again hosted the Dampier Peninsula celebration for the enjoyment of locals and visitors. The 2016 event offered live music, bush cuisine and traditional and contemporary crafts including fishing spears, bush-dyed silks and jewelry from the Ardyaloon trochus hatchery at One Arm Point.

A highlight of the festival was the art exhibition; located in an outdoor structure which caught the breezes under a roof of freshly cut palm fronds, the exhibit showcased the works of local artists involved with the Lombadina Arts & Crafts shop. Intricately etched bush tucker-themed prints by Caroline Sibosado hung side by side with contemporary depictions of traditional Riji designs by Garry Sibosado. Artist/curator Darrell Sibosado used the opportunity to present the results of recent experiments with acrylic. The display also included Ilma by recently deceased senior artist Mr. Wiggan, whose works have recently featured at the state galleries of Western Australia and South Australia. It was an interesting experience to view these ceremonial pieces away from the

aestheticising context of a contemporary gallery and instead presented outdoors in their country of origin.

The community atmosphere was reinforced by song and dance performances by local children and the entertaining stories of well-known local identity and M.C., Stephen Baamba Albert. The festival also boasted a full line-up of musicians from further afield, culminating in a powerful performance from Tura New Music's *Kimberley Reflections* 2musicians. This cross-cultural music program presented singer-songwriter Stephen Pigram (Yawuru) and master didjeridu player Mark Atkins (Yamatji) onstage with a violinist, cellist, flautist, guitarist and percussionist from Tura.

To the right of the stage a somewhat surreal sight lured curious visitors - the wreck of a gutted troopcarrier festooned with strained fence wires and other rusty additions. Enquiries revealed the vehicle to be a large scale musical instrument designed to be played with cello bows and percussion sticks. Created by Australian sound artist Jon Rose in collaboration with local Lombadina and Djarindjin musicians, artists, dancers, welders, strainers, crane drivers, teachers and students as part of the TURA Regional Artist in Residence Program, it was on this occasion a tantalising mute witness rather than instrument, as well as a testament to the creative energy and drive of these communities.

As the sun set behind the stage the band played one last encore and the festival drew to a close, leaving a relaxed audience sprawled under the eucalypts hoping this unique festival will return again next year.

Desert River Sea would like to acknowledge a Kimberley artist who recently passed away

Desert River Sea acknowledges the untimely passing away of Kira Kiro art centre's most senior painter, M. P. Clement.

M.P.C.'s father Gregory Puntji was a seminal figure in the early days of Kalumburu (then known as Drysdale River Mission). Between them, these two bore witness to almost the entire history of this remarkable community. With their art practices separated by some nine decades, they also both have played important roles in the history of art here since its establishment.

M.P.C first started painting when the Kalumburu art project began in 2009. Though ever-encouraging of the other woman there, her instructions to the first art coordinator were to 'chuck away' her own tentative attempts at applying ochre to canvas. Fortunately he didn't, and in just seven short years her work developed into expansive, delicately intricate paintings in which her love of nature and mastery of earth pigments were laid bare.

This is not only a heavy loss for her family, but also to the Kalumburu community and their art centre which continues against all odds. We send our deepest sympathies to all.



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