

Wednesday, October 11, 2023

## *mane djang karirra: the place where the dreaming changed shape*

Flinders University Museum of Art (FUMA) and Maningrida Arts and Culture are thrilled to announce the launch of *mane djang karirra: the place where the dreaming changed shape* in association with the Tarnanthi Festival.

This exquisite collection of 48 works spotlights contemporary painting practice in central and western Arnhem Land and the recent rise and recognition of women in this realm.

It comprises paintings on bark and on carved and woven objects, featuring imagery that has its roots in ancient rock art and ceremonial clan designs.

FUMA Director and exhibition co-curator Fiona Salmon says the exhibition traces the impact and enduring legacy of senior artists Dorothy Galaledba, Kay Lindjuwanga, Melba Gunjarrwanga and Lena Yarinkura on the prolific and flourishing community of today's women painters.

"These artists are at the forefront of contemporary painting practice – maintaining knowledge, language and culture while giving new shape and form to the traditions of central and western Arnhem Land art," Ms Salmon says.

"They draw inspiration from traditional designs and experiment with visual language characterised by *rarrk* (cross-hatching). Their work bridges the natural and spiritual realms, the secular and sacred, with bark painting and sculpture depicting myriad *djang* (Ancestral sites, stories and associated spiritual beings).

"These artworks on display at FUMA feature a rich palette derived from natural pigments. Ochres, which are forms of iron oxide or limonite, provide red, purple, pink and yellow hues. Black typically comes from charcoal, while white is sourced from pipeclay. Obtained from the artists' clan estates, these pigments hold deep associations with the Ancestral world."

The exhibition has been curated in partnership with Maningrida Arts and Culture – one of the nation's longest-running community-based Aboriginal art centres currently under the management of Brook Aisncow. Providing support to emerging and established artists from the region, the centre fosters diverse and dynamic forms of cultural expression and artmaking, principally bark painting, sculpture and woven work informed by ongoing connections to Country and the Ancestral past.

Artists featured in [mane djang karirra](#) are: Anita Bailedja; Gwenda Baymabiyma; Eliza Brian; Gloreen Campion; Jaylene Campion; Cheryl Darwin; Dorothy Galaledba; Joy Garlbin; Melba Gunjarrwanga; Rosina Gunjarrwanga; Philimena Kelly; Eileena Lamanga; Kay Lindjuwanga; Susan Marawarr; Kate Miwulku; Annie Mulunwanga Wurrkidj; Sonia Namarnyilk; Jill Namunjdja; Pamela Namunjdja; Zipporah Nanguwerr; Irenie Ngalinba; Christelle; Antonia Pascoe; Eileen Pascoe; Sandra Richards; Fiona Jin-majinggal Mason Steele; Apphia Wurrkidj; Deborah Wurrkidj; Semeria Wurrkidj; Anna Wurrkidj; Lena Yarinkura; and Deborah Yulidjirri.

Maningrida is on the traditional lands of the Kunibidji people at the mouth of the Liverpool River in north central Arnhem Land. The name is an anglicisation of the word Manayingkarirra from the phrase mane djang karirra, commonly translated as "the place where the dreaming changed shape." The English name was adopted when a permanent government settlement was established at the site in the late 1950s. Today, Maningrida is a centre for 34 Aboriginal outstations and home to approximately 2,600 people from some 15 language groups.

*mane djang karirra* is a free public exhibition which runs until Friday, December 15, at FUMA, Ground Floor, Social Sciences North Building, Flinders University, Bedford Park.

**About Tarnanthi:** Tarnanthi, the Art Gallery of South Australia's festival of contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art, is on from October 19, 2023 to January 21, 2024. Acclaimed as Australia's leading First Nations art festival, it features more than 1500 artists in AGSA's festival of contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art. A statewide festival with exhibitions and accompanying events across 27 venues; and the Tarnanthi Art Fair, an in-person and online event in 2023.

Tarnanthi Artistic Director and Barkandji curator Nici Cumpston OAM says: "Tarnanthi fosters opportunities for First Nations artists at all stages of their careers, opening up new pathways for creative talents. Artists from across the country have been making new works that highlight the dynamism and diversity in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art and cultures today. It is a privilege to share their voices through Tarnanthi and to bring this world-class art experience with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art to Australian audiences again in 2023." See [www.agsa.sa.gov.au/tarnanthi](http://www.agsa.sa.gov.au/tarnanthi)

**Media Note:** *mane djang karirra: the place where the dreaming changed shape* will be launched 6pm Tuesday, October 17. Guest speakers include Tarnanthi Artistic Director Nici Cumpston OAM, the Art Gallery of South Australia's Curator of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art and Australian National University Emeritus Professor Jon Altman. Attending artists include Deborah Wurrkidj, Rachel Thomas, Alison Cooper, Raylene Bonson and Belinda Kernan. RSVP and exhibition details [here](#).

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#### Media images and captions:

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**MANINGRIDA**  
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