

A New Alliance –

Kimberley Aboriginal Artists



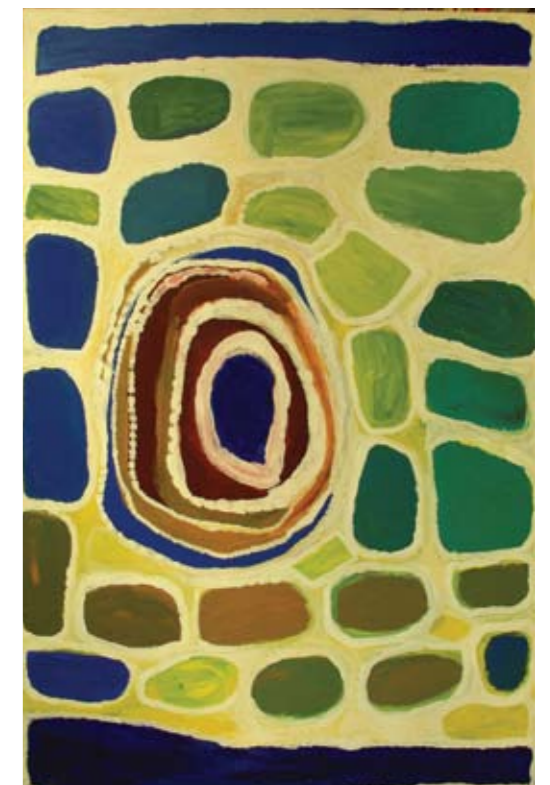
Shirley Purdie, *Ngalangangpum – Mother & Child* (2008), 100 x 27 x 27cm; natural ochre and pigments on wood carving; Warmun Art



Mignonette Jamin, *Muthanoongamaya* (2008), 56 x 76cm; ochre on paper; Waringarri Aboriginal Arts



Donny Woolagoodja, *Wandjina, Gyorn Gyorns and Unguds* (2008), 46 x 48cm; acrylic on canvas; Mowanjum Arts



Wakartu Cory Surprise, *Wayampajarti* (2008), 120 x 180cm; acrylic on canvas (Atelier acrylic paint on 14oz canvas); Mangkaja Arts



If this aircraft swooped in a southwesterly arc towards Broome, it could map all four member art centres of Kimberley Aboriginal Artists (KAA), set to launch this August in Darwin.

Just into Western Australia, ochre painters work contemporary magic at Waringarri Arts in Kununurra and at Warmun Art Centre, 200km on in Warmun (Turkey Creek). The medium changes to a brightly cloured acrylic palette 500km on at Fitzroy Crossing's Mangkaja Arts, and just before Derby at the Mowanjum Artists, the home of the Wandjina.

KAA will provide a portal for buyers and media to Kimberley Aboriginal artists. The alliance takes in a dozen language groups, so KAA recognises its artists' cultural diversity while aligning on common ground – the spectacular red earth of the Kimberley.

Also in Darwin in August, Warmun and Mangkaja announce two artists each in the running for Telstra NATSIAA prizes: for Warmun, Shirley Purdie and Gabriel Nodea and for Mangkaja, Wakartu Cory Surprise and Dorothy May. Waringarri will launch its new etching suite at Northern Editions.

The art centre story is one of openness and transparency. Aboriginal owned and governed, centres bring economic independence to artists, operate ethically and are audited annually. Staff can advise visitors exactly how much of each sale is paid to the artist, and that all profits are returned to the community.

In an increasingly globalised world, art centres keep culture strong by recording important stories, previously transmitted only by word of mouth, and supporting cultural practice and tradition – often keeping endangered languages alive. KAA is passionately committed to sharing knowledge through a commitment to public education and reconciliation.

KAA plans include national and international exhibitions, tours, a website and many other initiatives that are achieved most effectively as an alliance.

Look for the giant Kimberley Aboriginal Artists stand, launching from August 14 to 16 at the Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair in the new waterside Darwin Convention Centre.



www.mangkaja.com



www.mowanjumarts.com



www.waringarriarts.com.au



www.warmunart.com