

BUILDING STRONG ARTS BUSINESS

Newsletter #5 - July 2006

NT Indigenous Music Awards 2006

In August this year, Music NT will host the third NT Indigenous Music Awards, recognising excellence, dedication, innovation and outstanding contribution to the Territory's music industry.

There are 11 industry categories: Music Release of the Year; Song of the Year; Best Artwork & Design; Musician of the Year (Male and Female); Act of the Year; New Talent of the Year; School Band of the Year; Traditional Music Award; and The Hall of Fame (Top End and Central Australia).

There is also an additional Award made outside of the industry nomination process in which the broader community is able to vote. This is the Indigenous Radio – Most Popular Song Award. This will be awarded to the most requested song on NT Indigenous radio stations (TEABBA, CAAMA and Radio Larrakia) during the nomination period. Listen to your local radio station and get your requests in.

This year AIR (the Australian Independent Record Labels' Association) will sponsor the Music Release of the Year Award. Stuart Watters from AIR, an Awards judge in 2005, described the music at last year's Awards as a "brilliant display of Australia's Indigenous music talent".

A ceremony to announce the winners of each category and a music showcase will be held on 25th August at the Darwin George Brown Botanic Gardens Amphitheatre.

For more information and nomination forms, contact Mia at Music NT on:

T:(toll free) 1300 309 646 or 08 8981 1995

E: miachristophersen@musicnt.com.au



Indigenous Performing Arts Broker in Alice Springs

As part of the plan for the development of the performing arts industry in the Northern Territory, Arts NT has recently funded a unique pilot project to be auspiced by Artback NT. The project provides for the employment of an Indigenous Performing Arts Broker, based in Alice Springs to support the Alice Springs and Barkly Regions. Over a 9 month period, the position will undertake an audit of Indigenous performing arts groups and individuals, and play an advocacy and brokerage role in partnership with identified industry participants.



Photography: Mike

Patrick McCloskey has recently been appointed to the position. For the past two years, Patrick has worked as the Events Manager at Nyinkka Nyunyu Cultural Centre, Tennant Creek, and has worked in areas of youth development and drug and alcohol prevention. In liaison with the Northern Territory Police, Patrick developed youth diversionary programs, setting up the first program of its kind in the Northern Territory.

The initial phase of the project will see Patrick conducting an audit in liaison with Indigenous performing artists in the areas of traditional and contemporary dance, theatre, circus, comedy and spoken word.

Artback NT invites all community councils, art centres and organisations working with and supporting Indigenous performing artists in the Alice Springs and Barkly regions to contact Patrick on 08 8952 7134 or email patrick@artbacknt.com.au.



Northern Territory Government

Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts

Heather Shearer - Home at Last



Heather Shearer with her work Snakebowl

As Heather Shearer said, "Art has been my healing and my voice". In a project recently funded by Arts NT, this sentiment will be expressed by the bringing together of both older and newer works in an exhibition to be held at Watch This Space in Alice Springs. The project will establish a new context for Heather as a remote artist rather than an urban artist – in context of country and life now, underpinned by cultural maintenance and the transmission of cultural material.

Heather Shearer is a stolen generation artist, now living on the traditional homelands near Hermannsburg, west of Alice Springs. Removed from her mother and adopted into an Adelaide family, Heather has been returning to Central Australia since 1986 to reconnect with her Aboriginal family, locating permanently to her homelands in 2005.

Heather's work as an artist has enabled her to express her emotions and questions to her family in Central Australia and has allowed her to make visual statements about her journey and the stories associated with different aspects of her life and sense of self. Her first ever painting was a story about her two families, painted for her Aboriginal family to ask the question she needed to ask - and eventually find her way home.

Indigenous Art Exhibition Fit for a King

The King and Queen of Bahrain requested a private viewing of the first Aboriginal art exhibition in the Middle East. Maningrida Arts & Culture organised the exhibition, presenting bark paintings, hollow logs and sculptures by leading Maningrida artists.

The exhibition took place between the 9 March and 12 April at the La Fontaine Centre of Contemporary Art in Manama. Artists represented in the exhibition were : Samson Bonson, John Bulunbulun, Melba Gunjarrwanga, James Iyuna, Fiona Jin-majinggal, Hamish Karrkarrhba, Crusoe Kurddal, Kay Lindjuwanga, John Mawurndjul, Ivan Namirrkki, Samuel Namunjdja, Irenie Ngalinba, Terry Ngamandara Wilson, Tommy Gondorra Steele, Anna Wurrkidj and Owen Yalandja. Samuel Namunjdja and Apolline Kohen travelled to Bahrain to install the show, attend the opening and educate the public about Maningrida art. Samuel Namunjdja painted two works while in Bahrain and showed people how he paints and his techniques. The exhibition was a great success and Maningrida Arts & Culture will continue to exhibit overseas this year.



The Maningrida Arts and Crafts exhibition on display in Bahrain

Strong NT Attendance at The Dreaming Festival

Review by Steph Hawkins, Manager ANKAAA

The long weekend in June was an exciting time for NT Indigenous visual artists, musicians and performing artists who attended The Dreaming – Australia's International Indigenous Festival held at Woodford in Queensland.

The NT artists packed the program with highlights including Baru Kardal performing Gary Lang's new work "The Dream", the first showing of Art, Country, Culture - the ANKAAA photographic exhibition including artists demonstrations, Shellie Morris wowing the crowds, Warren H Williams performing on the main stage, NoKturnal taking the stage with their folk metal samba and star performances by Yothu Yindi and the Warumpi Band. The Pintupi women performed daily to large crowds at Dancestry traditional dance venue. The Arafura dancers also performed at the venue, led by Djakapurra and Rachel Wallace which complemented the Yidaki and weaving workshops by artists from Yirrkala and the Ganyu (star light) Gallery of prints from Buku Larrnggay also from Yirrkala. The festival also included artist's forums including Gary Lee discussing his photographic work.

Thanks to the IADU in Arts NT for providing funding assistance to ensure a high caliber representation of the Territories Indigenous talent.

Kathleen Wallace: Stories of Country and Spirit



Kathleen with her grandson Bart near the Keringke Rock hole site

Recently funded by Arts NT through its Arts Grants Program, this project will see stories of country, place and ancestors associated with Eastern Arrernte culture recorded in both Arrernte and English. The stories will be told primarily by Eastern Arrernte elder, Kathleen Wallace, with assistance and the involvement of other family members and other traditional owners.

Kathleen Wallace lives at Ltyentye Apurte (Santa Teresa), near Alice Springs. In her working life as an artist, Kathleen has contributed much to the development of the Keringke Arts Centre at Ltyentye Apurte, Desert and the Aboriginal arts industry in Central Australia.

This documentation and preservation of ancient stories will ensure they are told and retold as part of the learning for future generations to come. As part of the public record, transcriptions of some of the stories will be available through the NT Archives, who have also supported the project. The stories can be used as the basis for future developments of other activities and enterprises currently being developed by Keringke Arts to ensure the sustainability of the enterprise in an overall economic, social and cultural framework.

“I want to do this for the young ones and for their kids to know about their land and culture or this knowledge will be lost for ever”. (Kathleen Wallace, March 2006)

Tracks Present Mr BIG

Over a period of almost 20 years Tracks has developed a unique way of working with traditional Indigenous people living in remote communities, and is the only non-Indigenous dance company that uses these relationships as a major foundation of the company's work. Tracks has a particularly strong relationship with the community of Lajamanu in the NT, and together, Tracks and the people of Lajamanu have developed works that integrate Warlpiri culture and performers into mainstream theatre works.

Tracks next performance, Mr BIG, continues to build on this relationship with people at Lajamanu, with five teenagers from the community having been selected, from a series of public auditions, to appear in the show. Mr BIG will allow these teenagers to continue to develop their performance skills and allow them to work along side other young people in the advancement of their careers as dancers.

It is Tracks' ability and skill in bringing together so many diverse people and cultures into a performance rich with meaning that has led to the company's artistic directors being invited to take part in festivals and conferences in many other parts of Australia.



Shellie Morris live.

Photography by Peter Eve

Shellie Morris on Tour

The Indigenous Performing Arts Touring Initiative from Arts NT is providing a total of \$21,000 funding which will enable Shellie Morris to tour to Sweden and NoKTurnL, Wildflower Band and Warrabri Country Bluegrass Band to tour throughout the Northern Territory.

Life is busy and full of adventure for Darwin based singer Shellie Morris. Currently in the midst of recording her first album, and having recently performed at the Dreaming Festival on the Sunshine Coast, Shellie is preparing for a number of performances in Europe later this year with her guitarist/producer Glen Heald.

“Waiting Road”, the title of Shellie's soon to be released album comes from the story of her grandmother's mother, who stood by the road waiting for her stolen generation child to come back home to her.



Participants in Mr BIG promoting the event

23rd Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award Opens

The 23rd Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award (NATSIAA) opens on Friday 11 August at 6pm at the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory (MAGNT).

The opening night will attract visitors and artists from all over the country. The evening will include presentations to winning artists and free entertainment by Indigenous traditional and contemporary performers in a classic tropical sunset setting on the lawns of the Museum and Art Gallery. The event is free including entrance to the exhibition. All are invited to BYO food and drink.

Works on show will include paintings on bark, canvas and paper, prints, sculpture, fibre art, ceramics, glass, photography, digital media and video.

Overseeing the pre-selection process in late April was Panel Chair Franchesca Cubillo, who said the public would be sure to be impressed by the diversity and quality in this year's Award. Ms Cubillo, who also recently took up a position with the MAGNT as Senior Curator, Aboriginal Art and Material Culture, said narrowing down 297 entries to 82 finalists was a tough assignment.

"We had a very strong round of entries this year and, without revealing too much, there will be some really nice surprises for people coming along to view the exhibition in August."

The Award showcases the very best of Australian Indigenous art, highlighting cutting edge and innovative works in traditional and contemporary media.

"By introducing this new category we will further opportunities for those artists working with technology such as computer generated imagery, video and digital works."

"The \$40,000 Telstra Award and the four \$4,000 media category prizes aren't simply about competition but more so the celebration of Indigenous Australian art and culture. The Award is an opportunity for emerging artists to have their works exposed on a national stage next to the works of artists who have built reputations for 10 years or more. I feel really privileged to be part of this Award that continues to build strong momentum and tradition, so I am really looking forward to the coming months."



Blackstone Tjanpi Weavers Kantjupayi Benson, Nuniwa Donegan (dec'd), Angiliya Mitchell, Margaret Donegan, Melissa Donegan, Mary Smith, Freda Lane, Diedre Lane, Elaine Lane, Wendy Lane, Janet Lane, Janet Forbes, Shirley Bennet, Gail Nelson, Angela Lyon, Sarkaway Lyon, Ruby Forbes, Jean Lane. Ngaanyatjarra language. Blackstone WA. Tjanpi Grass Toyota. 2005 desert grass, jute string, wire mesh, steel, recycled wooden planks, found steering wheel, hubcaps and numberplate. Winner Telstra First Prize, 22nd Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award. Purchased 2005. Telstra Collection, MAGNT.

The 23rd Telstra NATSIAA is non-acquisitive this year, meaning MAGNT will no longer automatically acquire the winning entry, leaving the artist free to benefit further by selling the work. In recognition of the Award's role in advancing Indigenous artists and promoting appreciation and understanding of Indigenous art, MAGNT has been mindful of current debates regarding ethical practices in production, distribution and marketing. The Award is an important showcase for both established and emerging artists and has come to be regarded as the premier national event in the Australian Indigenous art calendar.

The exhibition will be on display until Sunday 22 October 2006.

Arts NT Project Grants and Quick Response Scheme

The October 2006 Round is coming up soon for projects commencing 1 January 2007. The Arts Grants Program offers artists, organisations and communities access to support for initiatives that develop, express and showcase Northern Territory identity through arts and culture. Applications close 15 October.

The Quick Response Scheme offers small grants up to \$1,500 to support arts activities of a time critical nature and professional development opportunities outside of the standard funding rounds. Applications need to show matched financial support. Quick Response Scheme grant recipients are required to acquit their grant within 4 weeks of the completion of the funded activity. To obtain a copy of the Arts Grants Guidelines booklet and application form(s) go to www.arts.nt.gov.au or speak with a grants officer about your project ideas by contacting Arts NT on T: 1800 678 237 (toll free).

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Building Strong Arts Business is a Northern Territory Government initiative managed by Arts NT

To obtain a copy of the Indigenous Arts Strategy visit the web site at <http://www.arts.nt.gov.au> and click on the Publications link or contact Arts NT on (08) 8999 8981 or (toll free) 1800 678 237



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