




WARMUN ART



warmunart.com.au





Warmun Art is here to celebrate and encourage the expression of Gija culture through the arts, and to support the continued development of innovative contemporary art by both established and emerging Warmun artists.

We strive to facilitate this through developing and maintaining a commercially viable arts enterprise, which provides a diverse range of cultural and economic opportunities for both individuals and the community as a whole.

Background Art: *Jimbirla Ngarrangkarni (Spearhead Dreaming)*, Lena Nyadbi, 2010.
Cover Art: *Yunnur (Spring Creek)*, Patrick Mung Mung, 2010.

supported by:



Australian Government

Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support

Everything is rolling in my mind,
I can't stop painting,
I like to do it and bring it out
through my heart, with the stories.

- Kathy Ramsey, Warmun artist and finalist for the John Fries award, 2017
Background Image: Kathy on country with one of her boards.



Warmun Art Centre (WAC) is a non-profit Aboriginal Corporation situated in Warmun Aboriginal Community (previously Turkey Creek), off the Great Northern Highway, some 200km south of Kununurra. It is a 100% Gija-owned and controlled community enterprise, specialising in fine aboriginal art featuring locally sourced ochre. The income made from sales of Warmun artworks is split between artists and the centre, with the centre's proceeds reinvested in operational needs that serve the artists and community.

Established in 1998, Warmun Art Centre quickly achieved local and international recognition, thanks to the leadership and guidance of successful predecessors including the late artists: Rover Thomas, Queenie McKenzie, George Mung Mung and Paddy Jaminji. The distinctive Warmun style of art continues to inspire a new generation of Warmun artists who represent Gija art and culture with bold character and exciting diversity.



Our Artists*

*There are over 70 artists engaged with Warmun Art Centre in FY 2017.

Patrick Mung Mung



Betty Carrington



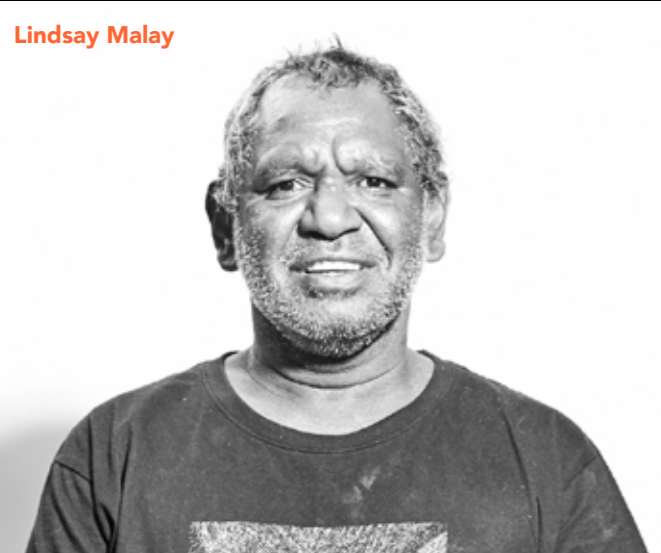
Mabel Juli Wurringoon



Nancy Nodea



Lindsay Malay



Mary Thomas



Kathy Ramsey



Rusty Peters



Shirley Drill



Phyllis Thomas Booljoonngali



Tommy Carroll



Shirley Purdie & Gordon Barney



Photography by Thom Rigney

Our Staff

Gabriel Nodea



Ralph Juli



Marika Riley



April Nulgit

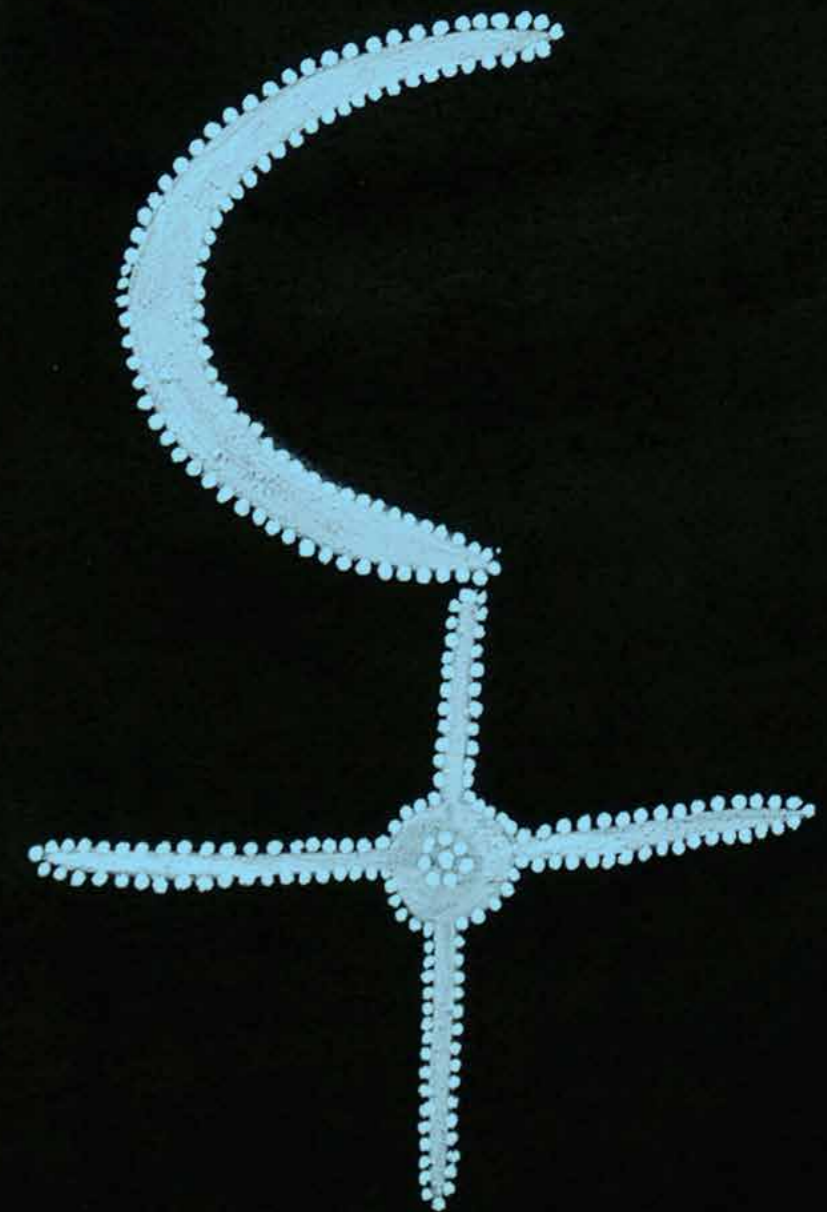


Lindsay Malay



The Art Centre is primarily and predominantly a Gija workforce, with majority of the staff members and artists identifying as Gija. There are over 70 artists actively involved with the centre, governed by a board of 11 directors, who lead the organisation, notably shaping its culture and values.

Background Art: *Garnkiny Ngarrangkarni*, Mabel Juli Wirringoon, 2010.



Warmun Art Timeline

1985

Warmun artwork being produced and distributed through Waringarri Arts Centre in Kununurra.

2000

WAC won the 'Arts and Media' category of the *WA Indigenous Business Award*.

June 2006

Opening of the *Musée du Quai Branly* in Paris, featuring commissioned artwork by Warmun artist Lena Nyadbi, gaining local and international media coverage for the Art Centre and artist.

2008

WAC won the 'Aboriginal Business of the Year' as part of the *East Kimberley Aboriginal Achievement Awards*.

26 October 1998

Warmun Art Centre is officially registered as a business in Warmun Community.

July 2001

All that big rain from top side, a painting by Rover Thomas sold by Sotheby's to the National Gallery of Australia for a record \$786,500¹.

2007

Sales exceed \$1 million for the first time in Warmun Art history.

2010

Jirrawun Arts, an Aboriginal art company in Wyndham, closed its doors; causing many of its well-known Gija artists and members to paint for Warmun Art Centre, adding to its high profile.

1999 – 2001

Sales grew from \$0 (1998) to \$650,000 in 2001.

21 June 2005

WAC separately incorporated as Warmun Art Aboriginal Corporation under the *Commonwealth Aboriginal Councils and Associations Act 1976*.

2007 - 2008

New \$1.65 million gallery premises built from a combination of Federal and State funding, and WAC's savings.

2010

Warmun artist Peggy Patrick is awarded a *Member of the Order of Australia (AM)* for her contributions to culture and for bringing Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians together.

March 2011

Warmun declared a Natural Disaster Zone when Turkey Creek burst its banks and floods destroyed the community, causing emergency evacuation. Many paintings destroyed, damaged beyond repair and / or missing.

2013

The Musée du Quai Branly re-engages Lena Nyadbi by commissioning her Dayiwul Ngarranggarni (Barramundi Dreaming) artwork on the roof of the museum, which is spectacularly visible from the atop the Eiffel Tower.

2015

Warmun Art Centre has an unprecedented four finalists for the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award (NATSIAA 2015) with artworks by Mabel Juli, Phyllis Thomas, Rammey Ramsey and Rusty Peters being shortlisted.

2011

Immediately after the flood, WAC artists continue to rebuild the business, and paint through assistance from Waringarri Arts in Kununurra.

2013

Lena Nyadbi wins the *East Kimberley Aboriginal Achievement Award* for 'Outstanding contribution towards Art & Culture.'

2016

Jirrawun Wirnan takes place at Warmun Art Centre; an official handover ceremony from Jirrawun Arts to Warmun Art.

2011

WAC and the Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation (CCMC) at the University of Melbourne forge an ongoing partnership; restoring artworks and building a Gija 'two-way' learning program for university students and Warmun community members.

2014

Lena Nyadbi wins the *West Australian of the year – Aboriginal Award*.

2017

Warmun Art 2018 Business Plan takes shape. There are over 70 artists actively involved with the centre, with a workforce of 7 (including 5 Aboriginal staff). WAC is currently governed by a board of 11 directors.

¹ S. McCulloch, *Contemporary Aboriginal Art: A guide to the rebirth of an ancient culture*, revised edition 2001.

Background Art: *Kangaroo Dreaming* by Churchill Cann, 2010.

Our Products & Services

Products:

Warmun Art Centre specialises in artwork created from locally sourced ochre applied onto high quality canvas and Belgian linen. The application of ochre on pre-stretched boards is the main product that local artists have been producing skillfully for over twenty years. Ochre artwork for sale is complemented by other products to offer a diverse range including:

- ochre and natural pigments on linen
- ochre and natural pigments on canvas
- fine art prints
- acrylic on linen and canvas
- carvings
- sculptural objects and artefacts
- print publications
- stationery
- other merchandise

Services:

WAC is a non-profit organisation that re-invests its revenue into the organisation, responding to programmatic and operational needs of its members. The basis for the foundation of the community owned and controlled Gija art centre included the need for supporting, maintaining and promoting Gija art, culture and language. Both past and current services / program areas respond to those foundational needs, and their operations are conditional to available funding and grants. Warmun Art Centre's main service areas include:

Core operations

WAC supports its artists in every capacity; from supplying all art equipment and offering them a working studio space, to hosting weekly artist meetings catered with giant mugs of *Nalaja* (tea) and meals ranging from fresh bush kangaroo from to local store-bought treats. Artists are welcome to use the studio space throughout the week, and their finished canvases are carefully photographed, catalogued and displayed in the state-of-the-art gallery on site. The services provided to the artists include high-level support in documenting their artworks, stories and repertoire.

Events, Exhibitions and Awards:

The Art Centre maintains a robust schedule of annual events, exhibitions and awards. Arts workers support artists in the promotion of their artwork to local, international, state and commercial institutions, working to achieve maximum exposure and sales. Artists are also supported and encouraged to submit their work to local and national awards, and arts-workers assist with the commissioning of artworks for every scenario.

A Media Lab

The lab serves to sustain Gija language and culture through the recording and sharing of traditional knowledge and participation from community members of all ages. The media lab is currently funded by Pilbara and Kimberley Aboriginal Media (PAKAM), and works in tandem with Warmun Art Centre.

The Joonba program:

Joonba is a specific form of performance driven by narrative. These cycles of song and dance incorporate painting, theatre, story and history. A socially significant form of entertainment, they are learned from childhood and practiced throughout life. They are intrinsic to Aboriginal art and cultural practice across the north of Western Australia including within the local Gija context of Warmun. The Art Centre sustains this important cultural practice by appointing a Joonba coordinator to oversee the annual program of events and activities that help revive and maintain Gija Joonba, which encompasses all three key areas of art, language and culture.

Bush trips

These are important for facilitating connection to country, and recognition of the important links between cultural activity and being on country. Warmun Art Centre is actively involved in Bush trips that occur throughout the dry season, including through partnerships with Melbourne University that foregrounds 'two-way' learning and promotes reconciliation. Bush trips have multiple benefits for those attending, and play an important role in intergenerational exchange and sharing of cultural knowledge, bush classrooms, healing, nutrition, discipline, well-being and sustaining Gija culture. Connection to country is also explored thematically in the artwork of all local artists.

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Jobs, Training and Professional Development:

The Art Centre receives some government funding to provide local Aboriginal people with career opportunities, and to develop professional skills and careers for Indigenous people living in remote communities. Warmun Art Centre is a beacon of sustainable livelihoods within the context of remote Aboriginal communities. It provides its people with income opportunities through the Arts, as well as through the development of meaningful careers with broad skillsets ranging from high-level business administration to more practical skills in logistics and operations. Training is ongoing, and depending on funding, there are many opportunities for artists and artworks to benefit from special workshops and professional development opportunities that occur all year round.

The Community Collection

The collection preserves Gija knowledge and culture through the display of objects and artefacts that are culturally significant and can be used for teaching the younger generations. In 2011, through Melbourne University's partnership with the Art Centre, many of the objects and pieces from the collection were sent to Melbourne for restoration after the floods. The collection now holds objects of significance and from earlier times on display at the art gallery, including artworks from the first wave of artists Rover Thomas and Queenie McKenzie.

Background Art: *Cocky Boys* by Melissa Martin, 2010.

Our Goals

Cultural Objectives:

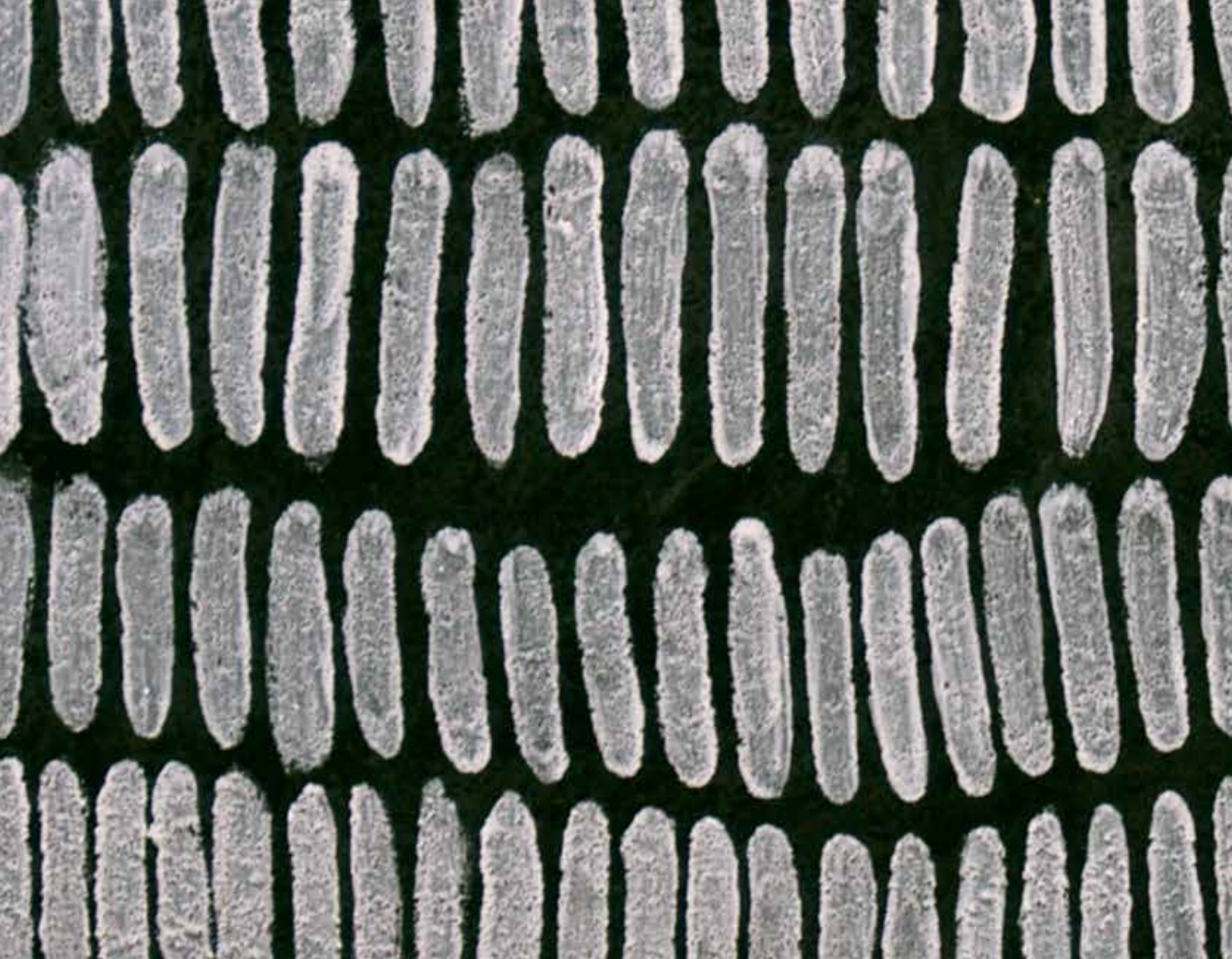
1. Encourage the preservation, continuity and dissemination of Gija culture throughout the local community.
2. Promote Gija culture to the world outside the community.
3. Develop new ways of expressing local Gija culture through art and commerce.
4. Advocate the importance between Gija cultural activity and Connection to Country.

Economic Objectives:

5. Provide ethical, transparent business and marketing services to artists.
6. Provide meaningful, sustainable employment opportunities for Gija people living in remote Aboriginal communities.
7. Increase revenue through sales of artwork and other products through multiple channels.

Social Objectives:

8. Work with other agencies in the community to build strong programs that benefit a wide range of community stakeholders including young, emerging and senior artists.
9. Create a strong internal work culture at Warmun Art Centre, to secure a sustainable Gija workforce.



VISITORS WELCOME

Register on arrival

Opening hours:

**9-4
Weekdays**

ph. 08 9168 7496

warmunart.com.au

e: manager@warmunart.com.au

**Warmun
Art Centre**

You Are
Here

Great Northern Highway

← Kununurra

Halls Creek →

**WARMUN
ART CENTRE**
Gija Contemporary Art
Western Australia

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