Indigenous Art Centre Guide: Far North Queensland

Amanda Gabori painting at Mornington Island Art, Mornington Island (Gulf of Carpentaria).
The Indigenous Art Centre Alliance (IACA) is the peak body and support agency for the Indigenous Art Centres of Far North Queensland. Established in 2011 by the community-based art and craft centres of the Torres Strait and Cape York Peninsula, IACA advocates for and strives to improve the viability of Indigenous arts enterprises.

To meet the needs and aspirations of its members, IACA delivers various support programs and advice, providing logistical services, resources, organisational and business development including training. IACA functions as a communication and referral conduit between Art Centres and stakeholders, fostering opportunities for market, promotion, and partnerships.

Erub artists with ghost net turtle. Image courtesy of Erub Arts (Torres Strait Islands). Photo: Lynnette Griffiths

Alcohol management plans are in place across Cape York Communities. Permits to enter some remote communities may be required. Access to some art centres is by 4WD only. Please contact Art Centre for opening hours and visitor information before arriving.
What is an Art Centre?

Art Centres are community organisations, owned and governed by Indigenous people. As non-profit cooperatives, Art Centres operate on a social enterprise economic model, whereby the maximum financial return of art sales is paid to artists with the remainder reinvested into the Art Centre’s operation and growth. Often located in remote and regional areas, Indigenous Art Centres provide economic and social benefits to their communities and play an important role in promoting cultural maintenance. In many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, art sales are the main opportunity for a source of income.

Art Centres support Indigenous artists by supporting arts, language and cultural activities, including bush trips to traditional country. Protecting artists intellectual and cultural property rights, ensuring artists are paid fairly, providing income, employment and training opportunities, supplying art materials, providing access to new media and technologies, performing the role of agent by acting as point of sale, authenticating, documenting and dispatching artwork, promoting and marketing the artists and their artwork.

Purchasing Indigenous Art Ethically

Buying authentic Indigenous art ethically is about ensuring that artists are being paid fairly, protecting the buyer’s investment and the sustainability of Australia’s Indigenous art industry. To safeguard authenticity when buying Indigenous artwork, you should consider the provenance of the artwork, who created it and where it came from. When you buy from an IACA member Art Centre you can be assured of artwork authenticity, certainty that the artist is receiving their fair share of the income and that you are supporting a community owned business which sustains broader cultural based projects.

When buying from an Indigenous Art Centre you will receive a Certificate of Authenticity that includes the name of the artist, title of the artwork and a unique catalogue number. Dealers committed to fair trade with Indigenous artists will be signatories of The Indigenous Art Code (the Code), buyers can look out for the logo and find out more about the Code at indigenousartcode.org
Erub Arts works to revitalise traditional Erubam le culture and share it globally. The sea, reef and marine life that surrounds our island is the source of our inspiration. The centre specialises in large scale collaborative GhostNet sculptures, wood-fired ceramics, printmaking, works on paper, jewellery and printed textiles.

Image Credit:
Ghost net squid by Lavinia Ketchell, Racy Oui-Pitt and Ethel Charlie. Photo: Lynnette Griffiths

GIRRINGUN ABORIGINAL ART CENTRE

235 Victoria Street
Cardwell QLD
(07) 4066 8300
artmanager@girringun.com.au
girringunartcentre.com

Inspired by the lore, culture and environment of the North Queensland rainforest, the art produced by Girringun Aboriginal artists reflects a continuing close connection to place through traditional and contemporary artwork in the form of weaving, paintings, pottery, textiles and traditional objects.

Image Credit:
Maureen Beeron, (Detail) ‘Mangal’ 2019. Earth Pigments on paper
MOA ARTS / NGALMUN LAGAU MINARAL

73 Ikilgau Yabu
Kubin, Mua Island
Torres Strait QLD
(07) 4069 4993
admin@moaart.com.au
moaart.com.au

Moa Arts is owned and operated by the Mualgal people of Mua Island. It is a place where ancestral stories, totems and family connections remain strong. The brilliant colours and forms of the land and seas are all brought to life through the prints, baskets, bags and jewellery produced.

Image Credit:
Fiona Elisala and Paula Savage, Women in Pearling Days 2019-20. Lino Print

GAB TITUI CULTURAL CENTRE

Cnr Blackall Street & Victoria Parade
Thursday Island
Torres Strait QLD
(07) 4069 0888
info@gabtitui.gov.au
gabtitui.gov.au

The Gab Titui Cultural Centre is a contemporary art gallery and keeping place for cultural artefacts, located on Thursday Island. The Gab Titui Cultural Centre provides visitors with a unique insight into the vibrant art and culture of the Torres Strait and Northern Peninsula Area.

Image Credit:
Jeffrey Waia Thoeridhay Kazi (Adopted child) 2018 Mix media. Photo: George Serras, National Museum of Australia
MIArt - MORNINGTON ISLAND ART

1 Lardil Street
Gununa
Mornington Island QLD
0418 224 953
miart@morningtonisland.com.au
morningtonisland.com.au

There has been a resurgence in painting at Mornington Island, in 2006 the Kaiadilt group of Bentinck Island women joined Lardil artists at Mornington Island Art Centre. Having previously operated in virtual isolation from the mainstream art market, today it is one of the most exciting art movements in Australia.

Image Credit:
Dorothy & Amanda Gabori, Our Mum’s Country 2019 Acrylic on Canvas

WEI’NUM ARTS & CRAFTS

Mapoon QLD
(location under development)
admin@weinumarts.com
weinumarts.com.au

Founded in Weipa in 2010, by five artists from Napranum, Weipa and Mapoon, the Art Hub concept was developed as a collaborative initiative of community and government representatives. Wei’Num delivers arts and craft based business and professional development opportunities for artists living in Weipa, Napranum and Mapoon.

Image Credit:
Margaret Mara, My Journey 2019 Acrylic on canvas
The Art Centre is at the heart of Guugu Yimithirr culture and supports Aboriginal people of all ages to learn and pass on cultural traditions, knowledge and the Guugu Yimithirr language. The artists cover a diverse range of practices including printmaking, etching, photography, painting, jewellery, weaving, dancing, music and storytelling.

Image Credit:
Wanda Gibson, Bayan 2019. Acrylic on board

Reflecting our strong cultural traditions and our relationships with our world we carefully express our love and dedication to the Ocean, to our Island and all of its Creatures and Animals. Badu is a special place, this specialness - this ‘Aislan Kustom’ can be felt in all we do here.

Image Credit:
Joseph Au, Mokan 2014. Linocut on paper
At Wik & Kugu Arts Centre Wik, Wik Way and Kugu people are recognised for their distinctive sculptural tradition and weaving skills. They preserve and share the diversity and richness of their culture through a range of artistic media including carving, painting, print making, and weaving.

Lockhart River artists have been widely celebrated for their innovative artworks inspired by spectacular local landscapes, traditional culture and community. Recognised for many years, both in Australia and overseas, as the ‘Art Gang’, today, artists work in a range of media, including painting, printmaking, ceramics, weaving and sculpture.

Image Credit:

Image Credit:
Josiah Omeenyo, Wenlock River 2017. Acrylic on Linen
Located on the banks of the Bloomfield River just below the Wujal Wujal Waterfall. All artworks are handcrafted at the art centre by local community artists. Boasting a unique style of rainforest art, our artist’s inspiration comes from the land that surrounds them, rainforests, waterfalls, mountains, rivers and the sea.

Image Credit:
Josie Olbar, Wuybur 2019. Acrylic on Canvas
**YARRABAH ARTS AND CULTURAL PRECINCT**

Museum Rd, Off back Beach Rd, Yarrabah QLD 4870
(07) 4056 9154
artcentremanager@yarrabah.qld.gov.au

The Yarrabah Arts and Cultural Precinct consists of an Art Centre, Menmuny Museum, gallery retail outlet exhibiting locally made arts and craft. The Museum displays Indigenous artefacts and local history. The Art Centre produces a variety of work including ceramics, paintings, jewellery, textiles and woven baskets. Visitors are welcome.

Image Credit: 
Philomena Yeatman, Coloured Reef 2019
Acrylic on Canvas

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**YALANJI ARTS**

Mossman Gorge Road
Mossman QLD
(07) 4098 1305
arts@yalanji.com.au
yalanjiarts.com.au

Yalanji Arts (Bamanga Bubu Ngadimunku Aboriginal Corporation) is located in Mossman Gorge Aboriginal Community. Artworks are informed by traditional Yalanji culture and the environment and include printed fabrics, textiles, paintings, ceramics and traditional artefacts. Eastern Kuku Yalanji country encompasses rainforest and ocean environments and stretches from Black Mountain to Mowbray.

Image Credit:
Vanessa Cannon, Rainforest Leaves 2019
Screen Printed Textile
‘Ku’ Camp Dogs from Wik & Kugu Arts Centre in Aurukun (Cape York Peninsula).