

INDIGENOUS
ART CENTRE
ALLIANCE

IACA

Annual Report
2020 - 2021





IACA members and presenters at the IACA conference in April 2021.



Australian Government

Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support



Australian Government

Indigenous Languages and Arts

IACA programs and events receive financial assistance from the Queensland Government's Arts Queensland Backing Indigenous Arts initiative, from the Federal Government's Ministry for the Arts, through the Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support program and Indigenous Languages and Arts program, and from the Australia Council for the Arts. IACA supports the Indigenous Art Code.

Cover: Mavis Benjamin (front) and Alma Norman with their Ghost Net imaginative wearable artwork. Image: Pormpuraaw Art and Culture Centre

All images are taken by IACA staff unless otherwise stated.

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About Us

Vision

Supporting culturally strong, best practice Indigenous art enterprises.

Mission

Providing sustainable growth through advocacy and sustained, high-quality support for the development, marketing and promotion of First Nations artists, their culture and art centres in Far North Queensland.

First Nations Acknowledgment

IACA respects and acknowledges the First Peoples of Cairns. We acknowledge Yirrganydji Traditional Owners, Pama Kulpul-Parra (saltwater Aboriginal people), of the Yirrgay dialect, spoken along the coast from Pana Wangal (Cairns Trinity Inlet) to Diju (Port Douglas).

Our work in 2020 to 2021

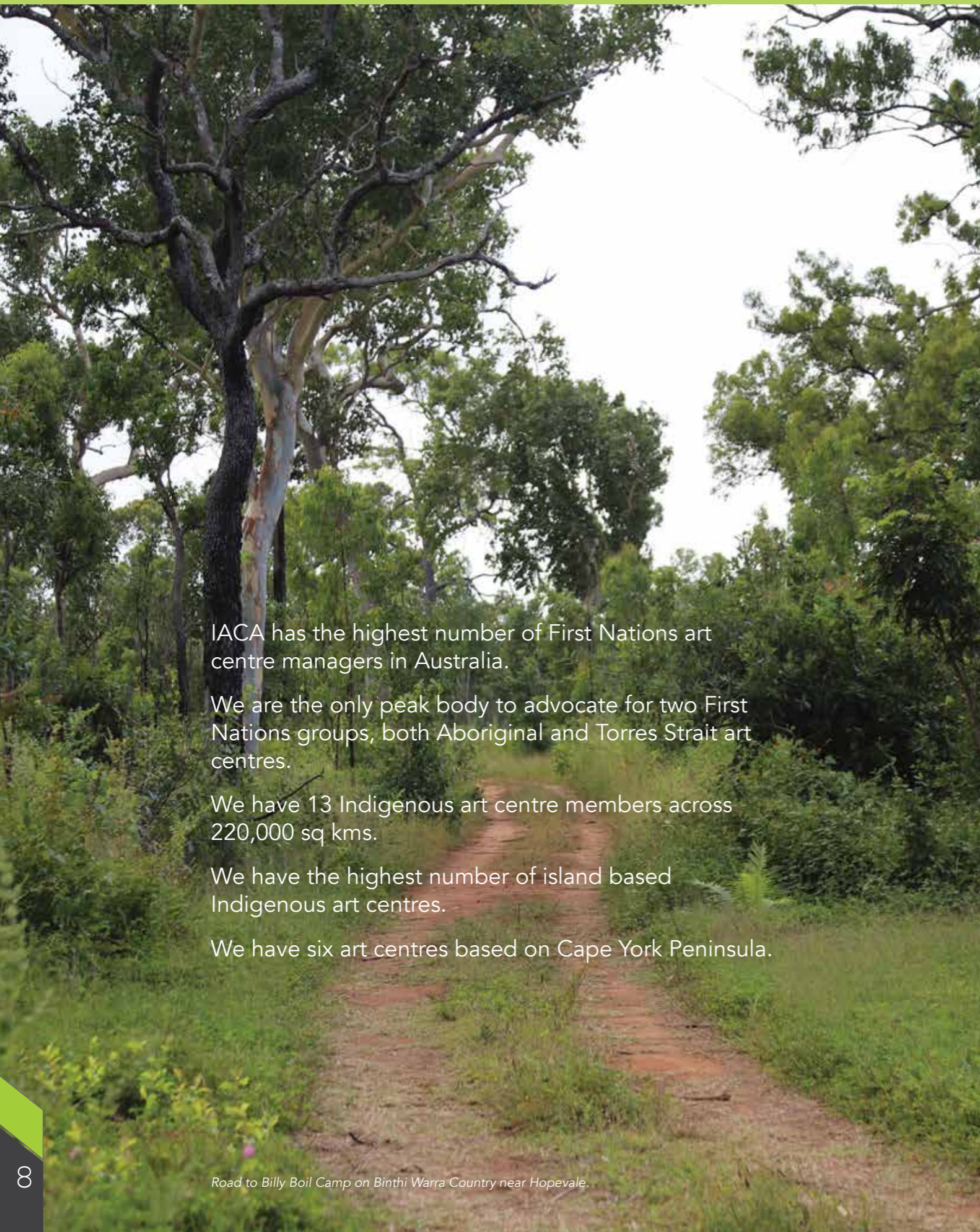
Goal 1 Provide high quality services that support excellence in Far North Queensland art centres.

Goal 2 Provide training and career pathways for IACA members.

Goal 3 Advocate for and promote IACA members according to our mission and values.

Goal 4 Maintain a national profile for IACA and grow the sustainability of the association.





IACA has the highest number of First Nations art centre managers in Australia.

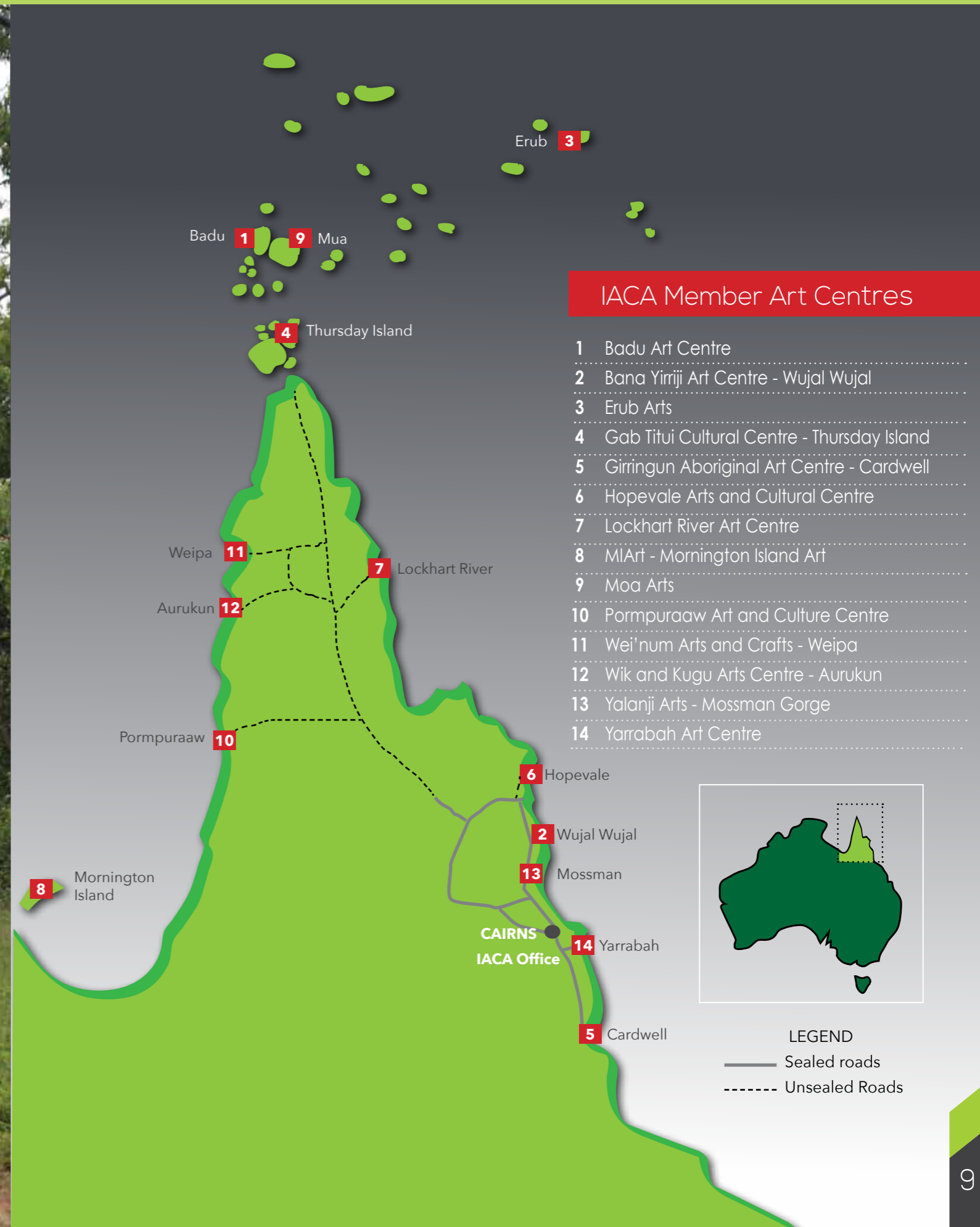
We are the only peak body to advocate for two First Nations groups, both Aboriginal and Torres Strait art centres.

We have 13 Indigenous art centre members across 220,000 sq kms.

We have the highest number of island based Indigenous art centres.

We have six art centres based on Cape York Peninsula.

Road to Billy Boil Camp on Binthi Warra Country near Hopevale.



Achievements of 2020 to 2021

We have over **500** remote art centre based artists in our membership.

We organised **40** artworker training sessions.

Six IACA artworkers completed the first Artworker training program.

We posted over **200** social media updates on Facebook and Instagram.

We had **1694** Facebook followers and **3864** reactions.

We had **848** Instagram followers and **1422** reactions.

The IACA website received **5713** visits.

Over **100** participants joined our IACA conferences.

We organised **14** professional development online sessions.

We booked **65** flights and cancelled **18**.

We booked **70** rooms of accommodation.



Presidents Report

Harold Ludwick,
President IACA Management Committee

Wandharra (Hello)

It has been another difficult year for IACA affiliated art centres. The challenges of 2020/21 have seen the need for art centres to adopt new strategies to continue to make sales. IACA was established to address the grassroots needs of Queensland art centres, and ten years on, the need for the peak body has proven as critical as ever.

IACA has been responsive and supportive throughout the last 18 months of uncertainty. Throughout the COVID pandemic, IACA has pivoted training to focus on all aspects of building online sales, including the best use of social media platforms and how to set up online shops on art centre websites. During this challenging time, IACA has listened and responded, maintaining close relations with art centres through Zoom meetings, emails and phone calls discussing and giving advice on what was needed and the best way forward. As the world fell apart, we forged ahead as one. The managers of our art centres proved that their position requires the fortitude to excel when times get tough, never straying from their cultural strength. I am proud of the respect they have demonstrated and the empathy they have for our artists, going above and beyond to keep sales strong and people healthy and happy.

Before the pandemic, our art centres proved to be the cornerstone of CIAF and DAAF art fairs, with many professional relationships forged at these events leading to future partnerships and art sales. However, the cancellation of the face-to-face art fairs in 2020 and 2021 has meant a loss of income. While their replacement with digital art fair platforms has produced much better sales than expected, particularly for Queensland art centres,

this does not replicate the in-person experience we all enjoy at these events.

Throughout this challenging period, IACA has successfully advocated to government for extra funds to assist with supporting art centres and CIAF to make the online changes needed to cope with the loss of income that has resulted from the pandemic. IACA attracted dedicated funds from the Australia Council Cherish fund to design and deliver the IACA Indigenous Artworker Program (IIAP), which addresses much needed professional development for IACA member artworkers. This program has been highly successful and has attracted further federal RISE funding which ensures the program will continue for another two years.

IACA's strong partnership with the National Museum of Australia saw an incredibly successful cultural maintenance women's weaving camp organised, which followed a research trip to Brisbane to view fibre collections at the Queensland Museum and QAGOMA. Held at remote Billy Boil Camp on Binthi Warra Country near Hopevale, the camp was a wonderful exchange of skills and culture between artists and artworkers from Bana Yirriji and Hopevale Art Centres. The collection of 415 works for the *Belonging: Stories from Far North Queensland* exhibition to show at the NMA in Canberra in 2022, have been transported to Canberra and all of the acquisition funds have been released to the artists via their art centre. The exhibition is now being curated by Shona Coyne, Principal Indigenous Curator, and will be on show throughout 2022. We all can't wait to see it.

Harold Ludwick



Managers Report

Pam Bigelow,
IACA Manager since 2012

This Annual Report will be my very last and it is with great sadness and very fond memories that after ten years I finish my time as the Manager of IACA. It has been the best job I have ever had but also the most challenging. The people are the most wonderful you could ever work with and I have been so privileged to be involved in the development and growth of the Indigenous art centres in this region.

2020/21 was another year where the COVID pandemic caused uncertainty and cancelled plans. The year began in July with art fair cancellations due to COVID restrictions and a swift pivot to digital format platforms for both CIAF and DAAF. We assisted art centres with transporting artwork from barges, planes and Australia Post and did anything we could to help members make the transition to digital form.

In August we were thrilled to win the prestigious MAGNA award for an Indigenous project and exhibition, *Belonging: Stories from Far North Queensland*.

In September we launched the pilot IACA Indigenous Artworker Program (IIAP) and with luck the artworkers were able to travel to Cairns to work together, learning to curate and hang an exhibition at Northsite Gallery and to do some career planning. The Northsite staff were expert trainers and very generous with their time. The ensuing exhibition was brilliant, aesthetically and curatorially, with clear themes and threads of connection drawn between artists and communities. The IIAP program has progressed throughout the year with great success, all delivered via Zoom with two weeklong field trips that were miraculously able to go ahead. Based on the success of this 2020/21 pilot program we have secured federal funding from the RISE program to expand and continue this long-awaited program for IACA Indigenous artworkers.

By October, and unable to travel or meet in-person, we cancelled our face-to-face conference and held a one-day Zoom AGM for members to convene and share reports. A new management committee was successfully elected and artists from every art centre

were able to tune in. By April we were able to meet for the first time in almost 18 months at our Cairns based conference. We enjoyed being able to share our struggles and successes from the year that we had been apart, and it was great to all have a laugh together.

May was a hectic month but also very rewarding with our Cultural Connections Partnership with the NMA in full swing and two trips involved. In early May we travelled to Brisbane with six artists from Hopevale and Bana Yirriji art centres to visit the Queensland Museum and GAQGOMA where the artists were able to see fibre artworks collected decades ago in the region. Following on from the trip to Brisbane, towards the end of the month we ran an off grid, on country, bush weaving camp. Twenty-five people attended this weeklong event where we cooked on the fire, camped under the stars and a full moon, and collected materials from the surrounding country. Weaving and dying techniques were shared and learned in an inspirational time together, and age old weaving traditions were passed onto the young and smiles and laughter burst forth regularly. The artists enjoyed every minute of being together and our IACA photographer Geri Henrici and videographer Alex Smee captured incredible footage that will be on show at the NMA for others to enjoy. Weaving facilitator Aly de Groot taught us some new techniques, while the artists taught us about plant dyes and weaving materials as well as the way to weave. I could not think of a more perfect activity to have organised in my last year with IACA.

I will never forget and hope to keep contact with the beautiful people from remote Far North Queensland that I've worked with this past decade. It has been a privilege to work in this job and get to know you all and your families and to have shared many special moments on country with you all. You are a deadly Mob and I know this region is poised on a wave to much more greatness. I am proud to say I have worked with you all, thank you for having me.

Pam Bigelow
IACA Manager

History

Anne Nunn painting her Kunjuri (Shield) using locally found earth pigments. Image: Bana Yirriji Art Centre. Photo Edwina Circuit

2010

Art centres from across the region came together as part of a Queensland Government-funded consultation and planning process, to determine the feasibility of a peak body for the Far North Queensland region.

Jimmy Thaiday and Erub Artists with ghostnet turtle. Image Erub Arts, Lynnette Griffiths

Key Dates



2011

Funding was secured from the Federal Office for the Arts and Arts Queensland for the establishment of the Indigenous Art Centre Alliance. Later that year, the IACA Advisory Group was elected, representing a mix of artists and managers.

2012

Pam Bigelow was appointed as the IACA Manager and built the operating framework of the organisation, including its incorporation and programming.

2013

IACA was incorporated under the State Associations Act, with both Deductible Gift Recipient and Charitable status. Kinship, the first IACA art centre network exhibition, marketplace, symposium and catalogue was launched.

2014

Research into the training needs for Indigenous Arts Workers was commissioned by the Ministry for the Arts.

2015

IACA began the Art Centre Development Mentoring Program and launched the Annual Lucille Osborne Memorial Emerging Artist Fellowship.

2016

Acknowledged as a key stakeholder in the national Indigenous arts sector, IACA joins the boards of Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair and the Indigenous Art Code.

2017

Gained Federal funding for Belonging, IACA's major arts and membership development project. Arts development and studio best-practice workshops across all 13 art centres commence. IACA undertakes a major cultural exchange with Buku Larrnggay Mulka Art Centre in Yirrkala.

2018

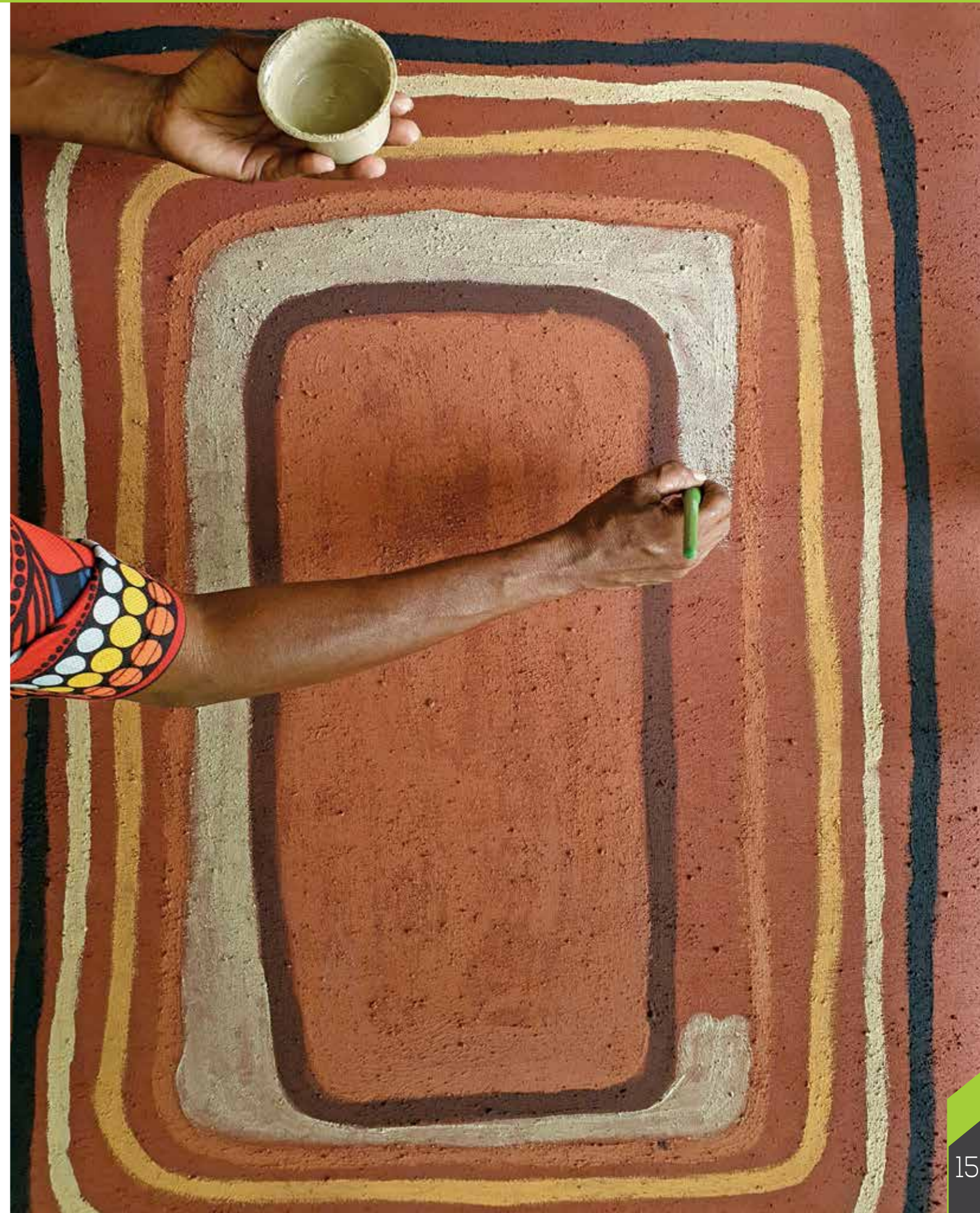
Australia Council funding secured for Northern Disclosure, IACA's major film and photography initiative. Film and photography training across Torres Trait and Northern Peninsula art centres commence.

2018/19

Major partnership with National Museum of Australia confirmed. The Endeavour 250 exhibition and cultural connections program delivered to four art centres in 2019/20. Belonging and Northern Disclosure to be showcased at the NMA in 2022 followed by a national tour.

2021

Long serving president Phil Rist steps down and is replaced with Harold Ludwick. Inaugural Manager retires and recruitment campaign is launched for a new IACA Manager.



Service Delivery

Art Centre Support

IACA's role is to provide ongoing support, training, opportunities and advocacy for its members. IACA does not have a high-profile gallery space, nor do we represent or sell our members work as this is not our purpose. IACA's work is largely done behind the scenes and as such, we highly value the opportunity this report gives us to clearly communicate our work, our vision and our contribution as a peak body supporting Indigenous artists and their community owned art centres.

Recruitment Assistance

IACA offers full recruitment services to member art centres. Support includes advising Boards and governing entities of best practice recruitment processes, developing position descriptions, advertising via ArtsHub and on social media platforms and art centre professional networks, evaluating applicants, sitting on interview panels, the provision of binding legal employment contracts, and providing induction, on-site training, hot desk support and site visits to support new staff members. During 2020 IACA worked with the human resources officer at Aurukun Shire Council and advertised for a Manager for Wik and Kugu Art Centre. In addition,

IACA launched a recruitment campaign in June 2021 for the Manager position of IACA.

Membership Communication and Mentoring

IACA posts monthly e-bulletins which provide members with a wrap-up of arts industry information, funding opportunities, competitions, grants, exhibitions, consultation, IACA activity, information and service updates.

IACA staff regularly visit the art centres to provide mentoring and business advice to art centre managers, drawing from its network of industry experts and service organisations when this support is required. Travel during 2020/21 was limited due to ongoing COVID restrictions. However, IACA staff did manage to visit the Gab Titui Cultural Centre on Thursday Island for the 150KZ exhibition, as well as Hopevale Arts and Cultural Centre, Yalanji Arts (Mossman Gorge) and Bana Yirriji Art Centre (Wujal Wujal) for the IACA Indigenous Artworker Program.

The twice-yearly IACA Members Conferences are an important forum for members to meet face-to-face, share information and participate in decision making around the direction, development, growth and promotion of the

North Queensland Indigenous art industry. These feed into the AGM and Members and Management Committee meetings which coincide with these events. Member feedback sets the agenda for these conferences each year. Feedback shows that membership presentations continue to be popular, as is the opportunity for members to access guest speakers for expert industry knowledge, team building and practical skills development.

Supporting Art Fairs – CIAF, DAAF and others

IACA continues to develop its art fair support model which successfully drives and extends awareness of Queensland Indigenous art. For IACA members, CIAF and DAAF are excellent opportunities to connect, sell and promote their work, and a platform to launch new artists and styles to collectors. At both CIAF and DAAF, IACA provides onsite support to member art centres including joint promotion strategies, multi-platform social media promotion, logistics, and guidance for new managers participating in these events. Both the 2020 CIAF and DAAF fairs were cancelled and replaced with online events. The outcomes of the 2020 DAAF digital platform were outstanding with the highest sales ever recorded.

Counselling Service

Working and living in remote Indigenous communities provides many wonderful opportunities, however it can also have challenges. Managers and staff working within Indigenous art centres have a high rate of burnout and it is important they have access to appropriate support, services and strategies to manage this. IACA continues to offer a confidential counselling service for all members including four free sessions. The service is frequently accessed and member feedback has been positive from those who have used it. This service has been very important during the recent pandemic lockdown periods, when art centre managers who are living remotely were further isolated. As you might expect, we have seen an increase in use of this service during the current pandemic.

Storage Facility

Due to the remote locations of art centres and the resulting high cost of transport, IACA provides a much needed and secure offsite storage space in Cairns. This service is used frequently, particularly during art fair season.

Consultants Register

IACA has developed a vetted, comprehensive and frequently updated Art Centre Consultants Register. Available on the members page of the IACA website, the register includes full contact, service and rate details of over 30 consultants and suppliers.

Website Members Area

The members area of the website is an exclusive hub of information accessible to IACA members. Over 180 documents are housed here including example templates, manuals, guides, advice, checklists, forms and policies. When our training pivoted from a three day face-to-face conference to 14 online Zoom sessions, we had the perfect place to house all of the invaluable training videos. If IACA members couldn't view the live Zoom presentations, they could view them at a later time on the website, and offer them to their artworkers. In 2020, with the introduction of our IACA Artworker Training Program, we have uploaded all training videos, presentations and material onto the members page. This has increased our information loading by 80% in the past year alone.

'Thank you so much for the information ... it was like opening a treasure trove!!!! Grateful thanks.'
Manager, Yarrabah Art Centre

Hot Desk

IACA has a hot desk available for members to use. Conveniently located near Cairns Central at the IACA offices, the private hot desk includes a desktop computer, broadband internet, printing and scanning facilities, air conditioning, tea and coffee, kitchen facilities and free off-street parking. Members are also welcome to use the conference room for larger meetings.

Remote IT and SAM Support

IACA provides free remote IT advice, troubleshooting and support via CompNet. As the database designers, CompNet can also consult, troubleshoot and answer questions around Stories Art Money (SAM).

'Anything I ask is attended to. A joy to work with.'
John Armstrong,
Manager MIArt.

Promoting Best Practice

IACA promotes best practice in regard to the fair and ethical trade of works of art by Indigenous artists, and actively directs members towards agencies such as the Indigenous Art Code, the Copyright Agency and Arts Law for access to information about standards for dealings between dealers and artists, as well as the commercial and legal aspects of the sector.

IACA Member Conferences

IACA conferences are held twice a year, organised by IACA staff and the Management Committee and chaired by the IACA Manager. They cover current information and advice on arts legislation and industry trends and provide members with the opportunity to access and connect with industry service providers. IACA is the only peak body to offer two member conferences per year.



Shona Coyne NMA presenting at the IACA April conference.

IACA Conference October 2020, virtual

A one-day online Zoom meeting was held for IACA Members on 28 October 2020. During this meeting, IACA held its Annual General Meeting, shared art centre reports, and held a members meeting. A new committee was voted in, and financial reports and annual report were tabled and accepted by the members. It was a very jam-packed and efficient day all held together with technology which was no small feat.

IACA Conference April 2021, Cairns

In April, for the first time in 18 months, IACA Members were able to hold a face-to-face conference. It was wonderful to be together again, share our stories and reconnect after a year of COVID lockdowns. Over the three-day conference, we looked at product development for online sales and the intricacies of artwork licensing to produce merchandise. Tracey Groves from Cairns Airport consulted with our members to understand how the airport can work in a more meaningful way to commission art works for the airport. A wonderful session on self-care for managers and staff hit a nerve for all, and more will be done around this topic in future conferences. Robyn Ayres of Arts Law gave an update on their services and answered the many legal queries the art centres had. We then visited the newly renovated gallery spaces at the Courthouse and Northside Galleries in Cairns. An industry specialist panel comprising of Shona Coyne (NMA) representing institutions, Paul Johnstone representing commercial galleries, Claire Summers representing art fairs, and Tim Acker representing industry specialists, discussed

the differing roles of these vital components of the Indigenous art industry. Shona Coyne spoke about the Belonging exhibition set to show at the NMA in September this year, and how it will roll out over 2021/22. Shilo McNamee and Claire Summers from Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair presented on Customer Service and Managing Sales, and Leah Emery of Artisan in Brisbane discussed opportunities for art centres. The conference was wrapped up with final updates from Arts Queensland and CIAF. Our conference dinner was held at Edge Hill Lawn Bowls Club where friendly competition amongst members made for great fun and a lot of laughs on the lawn bowls field. It really was great to be together again at this power packed conference.

Feedback from participants included:

"Great to have ArtsLaw and Copyright Agency - something to remind us of their services and to be able to have one-on-one conversations."

"It was great to learn more about everyone's career choices and progression and the importance of staying true to your passion and connection to culture."

"Big shiny medals for Shona and the NMA. Clearly articulated presentation plus back-to-back good news stories there. Refreshing."

"Very helpful with knowing how to work towards archives and materials in national museums, which is my goal for Djabugay people's history."



Yalanji Belonging workshop.

Story Art Money - SAM training

The Story Art Money (SAM) database is an online artwork management system that enables the cataloguing of artworks, documentation of artists and financial management for both artists and the art business. SAM is an essential operational software tool designed specifically for Indigenous art centres, recognised as the platform for best practice record keeping for artwork and money management. It is essential to regularly provide the opportunity for members to update their skills and knowledge in using this software. This year, IACA provided one-on-one SAM training via Zoom for all of the artworkers in our Indigenous Artworker Program.

IACA Artists Welcome

Each year before CIAF opens, IACA hosts the IACA Artists Welcome to celebrate and acknowledge the artists. This event is always very well attended and has developed into an important platform for artists and art centre managers to meet with collectors, curators and industry experts. As a service provider, IACA does much of its work behind the scenes. The Artists Welcome offers our staff and Board the opportunity to communicate our role and achievements. The 2020 IACA Artist Welcome was unfortunately cancelled due to COVID.

IACA Artsworker Training Program

Launched in September 2020, the IACA Indigenous Artsworker Program (IIAP) is a one-year program developed with the aim of extending and upskilling artsworkers through customised arts industry training. The IIAP participants are Nephi Denham (Girringun Aboriginal Art Centre), Florence Gutchen (Erub Arts), Bereline Loogatha (Mornington Island Art), Junibel Doughboy (Bana Yirriji Art Centre), and Vanessa Cannon and Jess Creek (Yalanji Arts).



Nephi Denham, Junibel Doughboy, Florence Gutchen, and Bereline Loogatha at Northsite.

To kick-off the program, four of the participants convened in Cairns where they enjoyed a welcome dinner, a personal development session with Joann Schmider, and practical onsite training in artwork handling, exhibition curation, design and installation at NorthSite Contemporary Arts. Under the tutelage of the experienced NorthSite staff, and drawing inspiration from IACA Member Art Centre artworks, the participants workshoped, formulated and installed an IACA Group Exhibition in just three days. The exhibition was on display to the general public at NorthSite Contemporary Arts Front Gallery from 18 September - 14 December 2020.

Weekly one-to-two hour customised online training sessions have followed. All of the

recorded industry expert presentations and supplementary learning materials have been made available for participants to access online at any time. Artsworkers are assigned weekly tasks which are workshoped in follow-up sessions and provide the opportunity to discuss the outcomes with peers in a safe and informal tutorial environment. Due to the small size of the group, the training program is flexible, responsive and adapted to suit artsworker abilities, needs and requests.



Nephi Denham, and Florence Gutchen at Yalanji Arts.

When COVID restrictions lifted towards the end of the year, the IIAP hit the road with the aim of examining the subject of 'studio management'. The coursework incorporated onsite practical experience via field trips to three different art centres - Yalanji Arts (Mossman Gorge), Hopevale Arts and Cultural Centre (Hopevale) and Yirriji Art Centre (Wujal Wujal).

Reflecting on the experience, Florence Gutchen of Erub Arts said:

"This is all about learning about other art centres. For me I speak, I come out of my comfort zone so I can see what is out there, how to make new friends, build a network, come to be working with our own people... I'm very happy to be a part of this, a special time for sharing knowledge and learning more, and I believe when I go back I will share".

Belonging: Stories from Far North Queensland



Museum and Galleries National Awards (MAGNA)

IACA has won a prestigious MAGNA Award for its ground-breaking arts development project *Belonging: Stories from Far North Queensland*. The Museums and Galleries National Awards (MAGNA) are awarded annually by the Australian Museums and Galleries Association (AMaGA). At a live streamed ceremony on Wednesday 28 October, Liz Ann McGregor, Director of the Museum of Contemporary Art, introduced the MAGNA awards presentation and IACA was announced as the 2020 winner of the Indigenous Project or Keeping Place category. IACA is especially proud of the win considering the high calibre of fellow finalists in this category

which included the National Gallery of Australia, Sydney Living Museums Mosman Art Gallery, the Art Gallery of South Australia, the State Library of NSW, Redland Art Gallery and the Bay Discovery Centre.

Winners were invited to speak about their winning project at the awards ceremony. IACA staff and president Phil Rist pre-recorded an acceptance video which was embedded into the awards presentation.

"This project reveals untold stories and perspectives of North Queensland Indigenous culture through art. It exceeds current museum practices of ICIP, embraces multimedia, celebrates the connections with diverse Country, and successfully secured partnerships with major cultural institutions leading to potential new projects,"
Australian Museums and Galleries Association.

National Museum of Australia Exhibition 2022

IACA has been storing the 415 artworks that make up the *Belonging* exhibition for over 21 months, as dates shifted around COVID outbreaks. In May, the collection was transported to the National Museum of Australia in Canberra for acquisition and exhibition. The *Belonging: Stories from Far North Queensland* exhibition will run at the NMA throughout 2022. IACA has commenced preparing the accompanying full colour 240 page publication that celebrates the tenth anniversary of IACA and documents the artists, as well as the growth and progression of the art centres and artistic development over the past decade.

Pormpuraaw Rangers 2019, Romena Edwards, Pormpuraaw Art and Culture Centre acrylic and fluorescent paint on cattle skull.

Cultural Connections with the National Museum of Australia

The Cultural Connections project is a partnership between IACA and the National Museum of Australia (NMA). The aim is to partner with local land councils, shires, and arts and cultural organisations to support community led projects that strengthen local cultural practices and knowledge transmission. It also focuses on enabling Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural practitioners and communities to develop and share their knowledge, histories and stories in a way that is meaningful to them.

Endeavour Voyage: The Untold Stories of Cook and the First Australians

This exhibition, which was a key outcome of the NMA's Endeavour 250 program, includes three interrelated elements: the Endeavour Voyage: The Untold Stories of Cook and the First Australians exhibition, the Encounters Fellowships and Cultural Connections. As senior NMA Curator Shona Coyne says, "Nothing speaks more powerfully in an exhibition than the voice of community who are directly related to the story. We know our audiences want to hear the Indigenous perspective on this story (Cook and the First Nations people) and these artworks are key in telling it. It's about time this story was told from both sides."

IACA was invited to become a partner in the Cultural Connections program. This included the women's cultural maintenance camp (see above) and arts development workshops run by IACA facilitator Edwina Circuit for the Endeavour Voyage exhibition that was on show at the National Museum of Australia from 2 June 2020 to 26 April 2021.



Artists from Bana Yirriji and Hope Vale Art Centres, IACA staff and facilitators visit QAGOMA.

Weaving Research Trip to Brisbane

In preparation for a women's weaving camp, six artists and artswomen from Hopevale Arts and Cultural Centre and Bana Yirriji Art Centre travelled to Brisbane for some firsthand research into fibre artworks housed in the museum and gallery collections. Participants included Betty Sykes, Anne Nunn, Sonya Creek, Hannah Gibson, Delankah RossHart and Kian Bowen. Special thanks are extended to Avril Quail at the Queensland Museum for the behind-the-scenes investigation of the collection, Katina Davidson and Sophia Sambono for an enthusiastic welcome and personalised tour of the exhibitions at the Queensland Art Gallery and Gallery of Modern Art, and all the friendly staff at the State Library.

Women's Weaving Camp at Hopevale

Coinciding with National Reconciliation Week 2021, the weaving cultural maintenance camp took place at Billy Boil Camp on Binthi Warra Country near Hopevale. During the camp the women went on multiple gathering excursions for bush materials, harvesting the grasses, pandanus leaves, and roots used to dye the natural fibres. Back at the camp, there was a great exchange of knowledge around how to process the bush materials as well as instruction and demonstration of critical traditional weaving skills. IACA staff

took photographs while videographer Alex Smee captured the action and commentary of the women, resulting in high-quality documentary records of the event that will create an important cultural archive for future generations. In addition to the intergenerational skill sharing of traditional weaving techniques, weaving facilitator Aly De Groot introduced some contemporary weaving skills which everyone was happy to try out. The whole week led up to some gorgeous weavings being created and some very happy women!

Special thanks to the artists and staff of Hopevale Arts and Cultural Centre and Bana Yirriji Art Centre, weaving facilitator extraordinaire Aly De Groot, videographer Alex Smee of Multi Story Media, volunteer Prema Clarke and all the wonderful Billy Boil Camp support crew. Thanks again to the National Museum of Australia for their vision and recognising the vital need to support cultural maintenance.

Wanda Gibson at the Women's Weaving Camp at Billy Boil Camp on Binthi Warra Country



Madge Bowen at the Women's Weaving Camp at Billy Boil Camp on Binthi Warra Country.



"I think it's very important that we share this knowledge, it is very important that our culture don't, you know, die out. I got a niece who wants to learn, well I like to share a bit of knowledge to young ladies and other old ladies. You gotta go for it, never stop, see your talents and never give up. Be proud of who you are as Indigenous people."
Florince Williams (Bana Yirriji Art Centre)

"Well, I taught my niece how to do it she knows... But as for the other kids they just, they just won't come and learn. Yeah, I just like the young people to come up and learn. You know, it's our culture so keep it alive. Otherwise they won't know how to make baskets and dilly bags and all that."
Wanda Gibson (Hopevale Arts and Cultural Centre)

"Well, I made a basket. And I enjoyed myself here. And I know how to make, you know, these wonderful things taught to us here, it was so exciting. I loved it. I'll be making these alright yeah. I'm gonna make some and sell them for money. I'm gonna go flat out do it. I know it now, I'll go all the way."
Gertie Deeral (Hopevale Arts and Cultural Centre)

IACA Indigenous Art Centre Highlights

- MIArt exhibited Dibirdibi - Stories from Mornington Island at West End Art Space Brisbane, as well as These Are The Things We Have Always Known at Woolloongabba Art Gallery. Joelene Roughsey featured in the Queensland Regional Art Awards. Amanda Gabori was awarded the Art Lovers 2021 Prize for Indigenous Art for her beautiful painting "My Mother's Country".
- Moa Arts has invested heavily in arts skills development with a focus on learning the technique of porchoir printing. Works by Fiona Elisala Mosby and Paula Savage featured in Longwater: fibre stories at the Institute of Modern Art in Brisbane in December 2020, which is also touring nationally in 2021-22.
- Erub Arts featured in Island Futures at Queensland Museum and participated in a group exhibition at the Museum of Natural History in Le Havre. Jimmy J Thaiday's work was selected for the Far North Queensland Contemporaries exhibition at Cairns Art Gallery. Erub Arts is one of four from Queensland to be selected as finalists this year at the NATSIAAs.
- Badu Art Centre featured in WARWAR: The Art of Torres Strait at Newcastle Art Gallery.
- Moa, Badu and Erub Art Centres participated in the 150KZ Coming of Light exhibition and celebrations at Gab Titui Cultural Centre.
- Hopevale Arts and Bana Yirriji Art Centre undertook a three day weaving workshop coordinated by IACA for NMA Cultural Connections program.
- Hopevale, Yarrabah and Erub featured in Contemporary Indigenous Textiles from Australia's Tropic Zone at Cairns Regional Gallery.
- Girringun launched a major new 3D digital platform in May 2021, and upgraded their gallery and visitor space.
- Yalanji Arts and Culture Centre held an important exhibition, Ngana at the Mossman Gorge Centre.
- Wik and Kugu Art Centre employed new manager Gabe Waterman, who has extensive experience with the Woyan-min Biocultural Project, bringing a new focus to the community's art by ensuring there is a strong link to the Wik Mungkan language.
- Wei'Num Arts and Crafts launched the Wei'Num Cairns Art Studio & Gallery in Cairns. Wei'num artists Daphne de Jersey and Margaret Mara were represented in the AIATSIS Art Market Illumination in Canberra.
- Bana Yirriji Art launched a new website and online shop and invested heavily in printing, jewellery and painting skills development.
- Pormpuraaw Art and Cultural Centre upgraded their website and online shop



Jimmy J Thaiday FNQ Contemporaries exhibition at Cairns Art Gallery.



Hopevale, Yarrabah and Erub in Contemporary Indigenous Textiles from Australia's Tropic Zone at Cairns Regional Gallery.

IACA Indigenous Art Centre Challenges

COVID has continued to be the biggest challenge of 2020/21. A major concern amongst our members was the potential of the virus to enter Indigenous communities with devastating consequences. Initially our members were very fearful for everyone's welfare, particularly our older artists. Art fairs CIAF and DAAF have again decided to go online, and our members have had to adapt to selling more work online rather than face-to-face. IACA has continued to use our members page on the website to upload much needed resources for our art centres including informative presentations on documenting work for online sales.

COVID-19 Industry Plan for Queensland Indigenous Art Centres

At the request of Arts Queensland, IACA developed a COVID-19 Industry Plan for Queensland Indigenous art centres. The Plan is to be used in conjunction with local government management plans and with consideration to all regulations, guidelines and directions of government and public health authorities. The plan provides a framework and practical guidelines around training and education, limiting visitor access, physical distancing, and cleaning and sanitation for Indigenous art and cultural centres. It also includes advice on record keeping for contact tracing and reporting of COVID-19 cases, guidelines for onsite facilities, as well as checklists for hygiene and cleaning, physical distancing, deliveries, contractors and visitors attending art centres.

Operational Update

IACA Staff

The IACA team comprises of Maxine See Kee, Finance and Operations Coordinator, Geraldine Henrici, Project Coordinator, and consultant writer and editor of the IACA News George Dann. Pam Bigelow the inaugural Manager, will be resigning from her position in 2022 and IACA is currently recruiting to fill this position.

IACA Office

IACA occupies Queenslander style offices just outside of the Cairns CBD in Scott Street, Parramatta Park. It offers hotdesk facilities, a meeting room and staff offices for members to use when visiting Cairns.



Farewell to Pam Bigelow

After a decade of working tirelessly for Far North Queensland and Torres Strait Indigenous Art Centres, it is with much sadness we announce that Pam Bigelow will end her tenure as Manager of the Indigenous Art Centre Alliance (IACA) in 2022.

Under Pam's leadership, IACA has developed into a strong, independent and effective advocacy organisation, working together with Indigenous Art Centres based in Far North Queensland and the Torres Strait. IACA Chair Harold Ludwick reflects, "Pam has been a huge asset to IACA and she was instrumental in founding this important peak body. Having a dedicated and hardworking manager in place for the past ten years is the reason behind IACA's success. It's also important to acknowledge that managing a peak body has many challenges, emotionally and physically, and to have done this for ten years really shows Pam's dedication to the Indigenous artists of our region."

Under Pam's leadership, IACA has:

- Incorporated with a majority Indigenous Board within 12 months of operation.
- Managed over 20 IACA professional development conferences.
- Published over 20 editions of IACA News.
- Established the IACA Artworker training program.
- Managed two major arts development exhibitions, Kinship and Belonging.
- Implemented Story Art Money (SAM) best practice software across the network.
- Represented IACA on national boards including DAAF and the Indigenous Art Code.
- Implemented research in economic and training needs for artists and artworkers.
- Established essential services for art centres including HR, art storage, art fair support, IT support, counselling, legal support, and a members only web page of dedicated resources.



Pam Bigelow at DAAF.

Phil Rist Committee member and former IACA Chair says, "It is with mixed emotions I say goodbye to Pam Bigelow as our longstanding Manager of IACA. Pam arrived at a time when the type of leadership she brought to the table was needed. Her professionalism, her unwavering commitment and absolute tenacity to the cause was without question. As a previous Chair of the organisation I found our relationship was based on these fundamental principles. What I loved about Pam was her humour. Some would say what humour? Well there was this crazy little thing I felt helped us deal with issues more light heartedly but at the same time, with an underlying seriousness. Pam has taken our organisation to another level and that will be in large part the legacy she leaves with us."

Promotion and Marketing

IACA News magazine

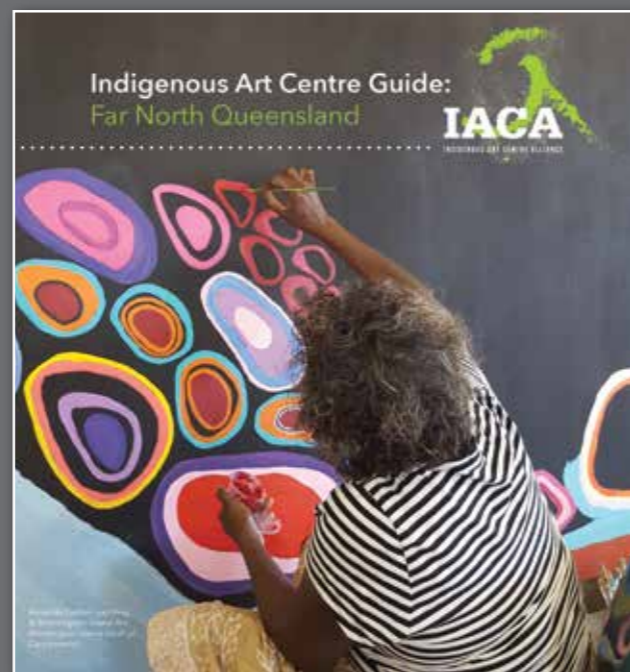
Uniquely, IACA News magazine is the only publication to come out of both the Torres Strait and Cape York, showcasing the stories, cultural sharing and stunning images from the region. IACA's role is to raise awareness of the remarkable cultural landscapes where IACA art centres are located, and this full colour, twice-yearly magazine communicates this in compelling ways.

Volume 9, Issue 2 and Volume 10, Issue 1 of IACA News magazines were published in July 2020 and March 2021. Electronic and print copies were distributed to the 500+ IACA newsletter subscriber mailing list, and widely distributed at both CIAF and DAAF. IACA continues to receive positive feedback about the magazine. It is a key platform for communicating the remarkable work that takes place at member art centre communities.



Indigenous Art Centre Guide: Far North Queensland

To coincide with the 2020 year of Indigenous Tourism, IACA has launched the Indigenous Art Centre Guide: Far North Queensland. The guide includes information about purchasing Indigenous art ethically, profiles the 14 art centres of the region including a handy map of their locations, and answers the question 'what is an art centre?' for its readers. IACA has developed two versions of the Indigenous Art Centre Guide - a printed booklet and an interactive digital version with integrated clickable links to art centre emails, websites, Instagram and Facebook pages. You can access the guide anytime via your personal devices online at iaca.com.au, or keep a look out for the guide in booklet form at Tourist Information Centres across Far North Queensland to get hold of your own copy!



Social Media

IACA takes an active role in marketing and promoting the membership, sharing and advocating news and events from art centres, and cross-promoting between the website, Twitter, Instagram and Facebook social media channels. Given the remote locations of IACA member art centres and the inability for most people to physically visit, social media has become an outstanding opportunity for art centres to communicate and share more broadly than traditional means would allow.

IACA continues to increase its social media presence, with IACA Facebook currently at 1,694 followers and Instagram at 848 followers. This equates to a 10% increase in Facebook followers and a 22% increase in Instagram followers against the previous year.



IACA Merchandise

IACA gift cards, along with IACA t-shirts, are extremely popular with visitors to the IACA industry booths at the Cairns and Darwin art fairs. We see many people returning to purchase our merchandise each year. Due to the cancellation of the art fairs in 2020 we have consigned the merchandise to the new NorthSite (previously Kickarts) shop at Bulmba-ja.



Website

The upgraded and password protected members area of the website has been a lifeline for members during the pandemic. The frequently used site houses all 14 of our training videos for members to access in their own time if they were unable to watch the sessions live. During 2021 we also uploaded resources from our Indigenous Arts Workers Training Program to the members area. For the public, the website is image rich, providing users with a clear understanding of the role IACA plays as a peak body for the art centres of Far North Queensland. The website includes links to IACA member art centres with integrated social media buttons for Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, links to the IACA magazine and other publications, a real-time arts news platform, IACA events and projects, articles, industry announcements, and current art centre job vacancies.



The Organisation

Committee Membership Changes

IACA held a virtual AGM via Zoom on 28 October 2020. Given the varying degrees of success we have when digitally connecting to our remote communities, it was a miracle that we successfully connected a large number of artists, managers and staff representative of almost all our member art centres.

A very big thank you to Philip Rist, our long-standing President and Committee Chair who stood down from the position of president this year. We are grateful that Phil will remain on the committee as his wisdom, experience and knowledge is invaluable to our organisation. Phil has guided us through all manner of challenges over the past six years as president and nine years on the Management Committee and has always been the font of wisdom.

We warmly welcome our new president, Harold Ludwick, Chair of the Hopevale Arts and Cultural Centre Board. Harold is a Bulgun Warra man whose traditional lands lie west of Cooktown. He identifies with the Black Cockatoo group with his Totem being the night owl called Mirrgi. Harold spent many years in various Cape York communities where he has been privileged to learn their dances and songs. Harold has six siblings and eight children, and his grandparents were among the Stolen Generation. His grandmother died without ever returning to her country.

Harold's life experience, his passion for Indigenous rights and his push for Indigenous issues to be taken seriously, has seen him advocating for Indigenous people both in remote communities and overseas since his late 20s. Some activities he has been involved in include the inaugural Jawun secondment program; presenting a paper titled 'Payment for eco-system services' at conferences in Geneva and Rio de Janeiro; helping overturn the Wild Rivers legislation; participating in the Diplomacy Training Program at UNSW; acting as facilitator for the second round of Emerging Indigenous Leaders program; leading the national 'Recognise' campaign visit to Cape York; and attending Front Line Defender international human rights training.

Harold recognises that Australia is a First Nation and his ambition is to bring the standards experienced by people in rural areas to the same level enjoyed by Australians around the country, to uncover the truth of the harsh history his people have endured, and to push for answers to the many questions left unanswered. Harold has recently published his first book "On a Barbarous Coast" which he co-authored with Craig Cormack, published by Allen and Unwin. IACA is very grateful to have a leader of such high calibre.

Corporate Governance

On 16 March, IACA board members met in Cairns for a Board Meeting. It was a sombre start to the meeting as we paid respect in remembrance of our lovable and jovial Board Member Eric Orcher who was taken from his partner and family in an unexpected tragedy. On 17 March, Board Members took part in governance training with Maggie Kavanaugh.



The IACA management committee (Phil Rist, Adam Boyd and Solomon Booth absent.)

2020/2021 IACA Management Committee:

President	Harold Ludwick	Committee Member	Joann Russo
Vice President	Phil Rist	Committee Member	Adam Boyd
Treasurer	Vikki Burrows	Committee Member	Florence Gutchen
Committee Member	Solomon Booth	Committee Member	John Armstrong
Committee Member	Bereline Loogatha	Secretary	Pam Bigelow

Advocacy

IACA advocates for its member art centres at industry events such as CIAF and DAAF and through the IACA News and online forums. IACA continues to advocate for its members on the Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair Foundation Board of Management as an industry specialist Director. IACA also continues to hold a Director position on the Indigenous Art Code Board of Management. In both roles, IACA ensures art centres are represented, consulted, informed and have the ability to contribute to national events and issues.

IACA also ensures our membership is involved in and consulted with for relevant research and policy development. In 2021, IACA arranged for the membership to meet with Professor David Throsby who

is running a national research project surveying economic outcomes of remote artists across Australia. The National Survey of Remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Artists aims to collect comprehensive data on arts practice and production in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Art centres are a vital part of the entire art system in remote regions of Australia and provide a primary point of contact between this system and individual artists.

Areas of research include:

- The range of cultural-economic activities that they have undertaken;
- The pathways for acquiring the knowledge and skills to become an artist in remote areas;

- Their current economic engagement with arts and cultural production;
- The spread of paid and unpaid work of different types, the allocation of time to different activities, and the nature and amounts of income earned;
- Aspects of professional creative art practice in the region; and
- The role of cultural production in sustainable community development.

The survey report for each region will provide the evidence essential for building sound policy towards Indigenous art production in that region. More specifically, the report will become an essential reference point for art centres and other organisations in their planning and in support of their funding applications.

"Great to hear about important longitudinal research being done that will be invaluable to us all in the years ahead. A good use of conference time and resources to include this," art centre feedback.

"Good opportunity to meet David and Katya before they visit next week and to also have a better understanding of the project," art centre feedback.

Funding

IACA programs and events receive financial assistance from the Queensland Government through the Arts Queensland Backing Indigenous Arts initiative, from the Federal Government's Ministry for the Arts and the Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support program, and the Australia Council for the Arts. IACA supports the Indigenous Art Code.





*Melomys Galai by Emma Gela, Erub Arts, ghost net and rope, 6cm x 4cm.
Image: Lynnette Griffiths Erub Arts*

Donate

IACA is a small organisation that punches above its weight to support culturally strong best practice Indigenous art enterprises. To make a big difference to Australia's most remote Indigenous artists, you can easily donate via our DONATIONS form on the IACA website. www.iaca.com.au Donations are tax deductible.

INDIGENOUS
ART CENTRE
ALLIANCE

IACA

The Indigenous Art Centre Alliance Inc. (IACA) is the peak body that supports and advocates for the community-based Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art and cultural centres of Far North Queensland.

www.iaca.com.au