About 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.

IACA works under the guidance and direction of a majority Indigenous Management Committee and is a not-for-profit organisation. There are currently 13 member art centres spread across the islands of the Torres Strait, the Gulf of Carpentaria, Cape York and the tropical rainforest and coastal regions of Far North Queensland.

Indigenous Art Centre Alliance members:

Badhulgaw Kuthinaw Much Art Centre – Badu Art Centre
Bana Yirrji Art and Cultural Centre – Wujal Wujal
Erub Erwer Meta – Darnley Island Art Centre
Girringun Aboriginal Art Centre – Cardwell
HopeVale Arts and Culture Centre
Lockhart River Art Centre
Mornington Island Arts
Ngalmun Lagar Minarial Art Centre – Mua Island
Pormpuraaw Art and Culture Centre Inc
Weli’num Arts and Crafts – Western Cape York
Wik and Kugu Art Centre – Aurukun
Yalanji Arts – Mossman Gorge
Yarrabah Arts and Cultural Precinct

2013-14 IACA Management Committee members:

Solomon Booth (President), Ngalmun Lagar Minarial Art Centre – Mua Island
Harold Bowen, HopeVale Arts and Culture Centre
Brett Evans, Mornington Island Arts
Vanessa Gillen, Yarrabah Arts and Cultural Precinct
Jeanie Heymatz, Yalanji Arts – Mossman Gorge
Samantha Hooker, Bana Yirrji Art and Cultural Centre - Wujal Wujal
Dev Lengel (Treasurer), Wik and Kugu Art Centre – Aurukun
Laurie Nona, Badhulgaw Kuthinaw Much Art Centre – Badu Art Centre
Phil Rist, Girringun Aboriginal Art Centre – Cardwell
Word from the President

As the President of the IACA Management Committee and a Torres Strait Islander, I was privileged and honoured to have the recent IACA conference held on my grandfather’s land. I was very pleased that IACA was able to take it’s biannual conference to Thursday Island and thank Gab Titui Cultural Centre for its assistance and congratulate them on their 10th year anniversary which we joined them in celebrating last April.

It was good to have the other IACA members on Torres Strait soil; good for them to get a sense of the beauty and remoteness of our region and talk about the similarities and differences of our art centres and the land we each come from. The conference presenters covered a variety of topics giving a lot of practical advice and inspiration to continue building strong art centres. It was good to have Franchesca Cubillo drop by and spend time with us during her time visiting Thursday Island to judge the Gab Titui Art Award.

IACA is moving forward and is strengthening its services to members by increasing its staff with two new positions in art centre development support and administration. The longer we are in the industry, the more we can see what is working and what is not and can strengthen IACA by improving support and services for its members. The more we are able to get together at conferences, to meet and increase networking opportunities between individual art centres, the stronger the group becomes.

Solomon Booth
President,
IACA Management Committee
The first half of 2014 has been a busy one for the Yarrabah artists. In keeping with their 2013 successes, the artists have continued to expand their skills base with workshops in monoprinting, textile design and printing, ceramic designs and woodwork. The result has been a new series of works for the Cairns Indigenous Art Fair (CIAF) 2014 and inclusion in a number of exhibitions for the middle of the year.

A visit to Nomad Art Gallery when Michelle and Philomena Yeatman were in Darwin for the 2013 NATSIAA awards, has resulted in an exhibition of their works from 5-27 July 2014 and includes textiles, prints and ceramics. This will be the first NT exhibition for the Yarrabah artists. Meanwhile Edna Ambrym, who always claims she is not a potter, was selected as a finalist in the 2014 SAM National Indigenous Ceramic Arts Awards with her ‘Bala Deejay’ sculpture and Michelle Yeatman, who claims she is not a painter, was a finalist in the One Sight Rayban Indigenous Design Award with her design.

In the meantime, Michelle Yeatman is busy working on her very large glass coil pot for the prestigious Sculpture by the Sea, Bondi 2014. Michelle was selected out of over 450 entrants from 23 countries and is thrilled at the concept of exhibiting her style of work in such a huge arena. Sculpture by the Sea is seen by millions each November and it is a wonderful opportunity for Yarrabah and its artists to be recognised on this kind of scale.

Yarrabah artists continue their successful journey into new mediums and opportunities and proudly invited everyone to celebrate at the inaugural annual Yarrabah Art and Cultural day on 28 June 2014.

Vanessa Gillen
Manager, Yarrabah Arts and Cultural Precinct

All Photos: Courtesy of Yarrabah Arts and Cultural Precinct
HOPEVALE YOUTH STEPPIN’ UP!

The roll out of our youth engagement strategy here at HopeVale Arts & Cultural Centre is well underway. In the last few months centre Manager Melanie Gibson has led staff to deliver a range of regular cultural programs that aim to engage the youth of HopeVale into activities that are centred around cultural archiving, film making productions, song writing, leadership and intergenerational sharing. Programs have included youth cultural trivia nights, assisting elders with the collection of materials for traditional basket weaving, a youth pig hunting competition, traditional dance and most recently a three day youth leadership camp which was held on a Bintji Warra outstation.

Song writing and recording workshops out on country.

plenty of positive feedback. We will be coordinating regular camps that not only allow youth to reconnect with their traditional clan estates but also take part in workshops that build their capacity in indigenous film making and art practices.

HopeVale youth taking part in multimedia workshops with Creative Tracks.

Fifteen youth from HopeVale attended the camp and took part in a large variety of workshops that were aimed to raise serious discussions about self pride, cultural pride, local clan estates, and cultural responsibilities. We worked with services such as the Royal Flying Doctors, Indigenous Affairs Group, HopeVale Council and Creative Tracks who are based in Brisbane. Creative Tracks worked with the youth to build their confidence in film making and song writing by producing a number of short films and songs which will be screened at our next youth movie night. The first of many cultural camps coordinated by the Centre was a great success with the youth providing

Creative Tracks team members Steph and Kitch delivering music workshops to the youth.

Along with our usual art production, youth engagement has been a major focus of the Centre in 2014. We have gone from having very little input from local peoples under the age of 25 to daily engagement with a significant number of local youth in our cultural and arts programs. We are aiming to bridge the gap in our community between old and young and between the engaged and disengaged. The Centre is the first community organisation to successfully implement a youth engagement strategy that has been developed with their input and is achieving real and sustainable results. Youth who are registered with My Pathways, as an RJP, are receiving daily training in art centre operations, administration, and arts worker duties through our Centre. In the near future, youth will commence a number of textile and photographic workshops in hope to create their own specific products that will be for sale through the Centre. As a result of the implementation of our youth engagement strategy the Centre is buzzing with excitement and thanks to an $80,000 donation from HopeVale Congress we are currently in the process of building a large youth shed on the art centre’s premises to accommodate our new programs and increased membership. Happy times for the young people of our community!

Tara Zauce
Business Mentor, HopeVale Arts & Cultural Centre
All photos: Courtesy of HopeVale Arts Centre & Creative Tracks
A very moving and strong ‘Welcome to Country’ by Kaurareg Traditional Owner and Chairperson of the Kaurareg Native Title Aboriginal Corporation, Milton Savage, set the tone for the first IACA members’ conference of 2014. Held on Thursday Island, Milton’s welcome gave IACA members from across Far North Queensland a wonderful sense of place and respect for the people and country. Everyone gained greatly from meeting on our fellow members’ country in the Torres Strait. There was a tangible difference felt and IACA now plans to hold future professional development conferences together, on country, within the region of its members. Our next conference is planned to be held on Girramay country in Cardwell.

The Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) kindly made their wonderful conference room available for IACA and we were very appreciative of their excellent facilities and stunning water views. Our guest speakers included Board Chair, Dora Griffiths, and Art Centre Manager, Cathy Cummins, from Waringarri Aboriginal Arts who travelled from Kununurra, WA to join us. Dora and Cathy gave two highly inspiring presentations, entitled Celebrating Art and Culture and Strong Art Centre Business, looking at how Waringarri has developed from humble beginnings to the successful and
strong art centre it is today. We also were all able to ‘Dive into Digital’ with Michele Dale who encouraged everyone to get online and social, and explored the benefits of a social media and web presence. The IACA Management Committee President, Solomon Booth, shared his wonderful experience in London late last year when he participated in the prestigious ‘Accelerate Indigenous Leadership Programme. Alison Copley, CEO of the Cairns Indigenous Art Fair (CIAF), joined us via video conference providing information about CIAF in 2014 and Erub Arts Manager, Di Lui, shared her experience of Story Art Money (SAM) and how this database can make an art centre manager’s life much easier and more organised.

On the second day, we were privileged to meet with a number of recognised industry peers who were in town to celebrate the Gab Titui Cultural Centre’s 10th anniversary. Franchesca Cubillo, Chair of the Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair and Senior Advisor to the National Gallery of Australia, Dr Michael Pickering, Senior Curatorial Fellow and Head of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Program at the National Museum of Australia, along with Curator, Tina Baum, and Assistant Curator, Kellie Cole, from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art department at the National Gallery of Australia, all joined us for lunch. Busy judging the Gab Titui Art Award, Franchesca generously returned later to present the group with interesting background to the Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair and answered many questions from the group.

We always gain much from within our own membership during this valuable time together and share the good, the bad and the awesome; this conference on Thursday Island was no exception. The members enjoyed an after-hours sunset boat ride, a walk to Green Hill Fort for the full moon rise over the Straits and the fabulous Gab Titui Cultural Centre 10th Anniversary and Art Award festivities. Thanks for having us Gab Titui, we felt very welcomed and were privileged to be part of your celebrations.

Pam Bigelow
IACA Manager

All Photos by: Emma Fowler-Thomason
and Pam Bigelow
VESSEL – YALANJI ARTISTS AT TANKS ARTS CENTRE, JUNE-JULY 2014

An exhibition at Tanks Arts Centre reveals new monoprints and ceramics by Yalanji Artists of Mossman Gorge.

Yalanji people have grown up with the stories of their ancestors. As artists, they are 'holders' of knowledge, both cultural and technical, and give life to these cultural stories.

Using sculptural ceramic form and linear monoprint, Yalanji artists have worked to extend the idea of 'vessel' as a traditional and contemporary container of domestic importance. The ceramic forms reference the Yalanji rainforest environment and were created for this exhibition are the result of exploratory work that focussed on skills in hand building and decorating, including the use of slips either as scraffito or inlay.

The monoprints, printed from a wooden bench rich with its own character and texture, were made collaboratively from designs developed by individual artists. These large scale works produced for Vessel are the result of a project that began with drawing a collection of varied shaped vessel forms. Focus was intentionally on highlighting key compositional elements - the balance of shape, line, texture, light and dark. Some smaller monoprints were also made, including 'ghost prints' which used the design a second time with the existing ink 'plate' and leaving marks made from the first printing. This second print created a more subtle and textured effect.

Minimal in design and approach and starkly black on white, the prints are striking counterpoint to the natural tactility of the ceramics and made for a compelling show of Yalanji talent.

Jeannie Heynatz
Art Centre Manager,
Yalanji Arts - Mossman Gorge
AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM ACQUIRES PORMPURAAW GHOST NET SCULPTURES

In my job at the Australian Museum in Sydney, I’ve been privileged to meet and see the work of Indigenous artists from all across Australia. So there is no doubt in my mind that North Queensland and the Torres Strait is now one of the most dynamic and exciting places for Indigenous art in this country. Events like the Cairns Indigenous Art Fair (CIAF) and the 2013 Kinship exhibition, presented by the Indigenous Art Centre Alliance (IACA), the peak body for FNQ Indigenous art centers, are a great showcase for the creativity, vitality and even exuberance of the local art scene.

While Kinship had so many highlights, for me I just couldn’t go past the ghost net sculptures from Pormpuraaw. The Museum has been acquiring the colourful and environmentally significant ghost net sculpture from Erub for several years now, and I knew that work from Pormpuraaw would be equally valuable as part of our permanent collections. Luckily, our generous donors and financial supporters in the Australian Museum Foundation agreed, and we are now (with the help of art centre co-ordinator Paul Jakubowski) in the process of acquiring ghost net works from Pormpuraaw artists Simon Norman, Sid Bruce Short Joe and Elliot Koonutta.

Our new ghost net sculptures from both Pormpuraaw and Erub will be going on show at the Australian Museum in a new exhibition, Sea Country, opening in November, where they are sure to be appreciated by Sydney audiences.

Dr Scott Mitchell
Head, Culture
Conservation and Consulting,
Australian Museum

ERUB ARTS SALTWATER COUNTRY PROJECT

The Gold Coast City Gallery has curated ‘Saltwater Country,’ an exhibition which involves leading Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists. This exhibition will open on the Gold Coast in July before embarking on an international and national tour for almost three years, travelling to the Australian Embassy in Washington DC and Utrecht in Belgium.

Saltwater Country embraces the strong cultural connection that Queensland Indigenous people have with the sea along the coastline of this state.

In preparation for this exhibition, prominent Aboriginal artist Judy Watson, accompanied by photographer and co-curator Jo-Anne Driessens and Hammond Island artist Ceferino Sabatino, worked alongside Erub artists and facilitating artist Lynnette Griffiths. Judy is well known for her experience in the production of large scale works and public works, including the tilt train panels.

Prior to the arrival of the visiting team, Erub Artists had chosen to create a large ghostnet sculpture of a sardine scoop, ‘Weres’, as a symbol of their connection to the sea. Exchanges of ideas were communicated with Lynnette, who oversaw the process from development to completion.

Over a week, Judy conducted workshops in watercolours and composition alongside the ongoing work to construct the Weres.

Creating a work which continues the collaborative model started by Ghost Net Australia in 2009 has been significant, recognising that great works come from working together cross-culturally and sharing ideas. Ghost net (derelict, drifting fishing net) is not just an art medium, it carries a huge environmental message about looking after our oceans to protect our food source for the future. It is fitting that the artists chose to make a giant sardine scoop, weres - a traditional fishing tool, to send this message internationally. The Weres installation will be accompanied by digital vision of sardines schooling and a colourful cloth drape, screen-printed with images of tidal lines, stone fish traps and the words from a traditional weres song.

Erub Arts gratefully acknowledges freight assistance from Seawift shipping for the freight of Weres from Darnley Island to Cairns, on its journey to the Gold Coast.

Diana Hui
Art Centre Manager, Erub Erwer Meta, Darnley Island

ABOVE: Simon Norman Barramundi made from Ghost Net
Photo by: Paul Jakubowski
**AURUKUN NEWS**

Aurukun has always been known for its strong totemic sculptures, especially the Ku (dog sculptures). This year Aurukun and its artists are privileged to not only be present at the Cairns Indigenous Art Fair, but also to be showcasing prints at the Cairns Regional Gallery as part of the exhibition, Ground: New Intaglio Works from Western Cape York, and, best of all, Aurukun artists will be featured at KickArts with the ultimate Ku show, NYINGKANAM: New One.

At KickArts, we will also feature artist and elder, Akay Koo’oila. At 92, Akay still paints her memories of the swamps, the flowers and often thinks of her son when she paints. Akay’s husband Eric Koo’oila was a legendary figure in the landrights movement of the 70’s and 80’s.

Aurukun artists collaborated with Badu Art Centre on a casting workshop on Bedu Island in the Torres Strait which resulted in a fantastic body of work. Tasmanian artist David Hamilton guided artists Garry Namponan, Leigh Namponan, Bevan Namponan and Roderick Yunupiŋu through the mould-making process and the subsequent pouring of the works. Aurukun is Bauxite country so it was only natural to make the works from aluminium. We were privileged to have the Minister of Indigenous Affairs, Senator Nigel Scullion, present at the opening of the first mould.

The series of etchings were created during workshops with master printer Dian Darmansyah and ceramics were produced during workshops at Weipa Pottery under the tutelage of Lyn Bates.

All in all, an amazing body of work.

*Dev Lengel*
Manager, Wik-Kuŋu Art Centre

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Kugu law poles can be seen at the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, the Belgium National Art Gallery and at the Cairns Airport. They are an important symbol for Kugu culture. Joel is famous for his poles and his work is found in Belgium. The poles in Canberra were done by Joel’s father, also named Joel. Different tribes have different pole designs and most of them are symbolic of a tree placed in the ground upside down. Joel’s are modern in design because the stripes are wide instead of very thin.

“The Pormpuraaw art centre is the first to erect poles on their native country in living memory. We engaged Joel Ngallametta to install seven poles throughout our community. Elders tell me of a few old poles still out in the bush nearby. We plan to do an expedition to find these poles and document them and their locations. This project has been part of our public art program and we hope to develop designs from our other tribes and use them in our program.”

*Paul Jakobowski*
Manager, Pormpuraaw Art and Culture Centre
NEW PRODUCT RANGE
BY GIRRINGUN ARTISTS

Girringun Aboriginal Art Centre will launch an exciting new range of hand-made and independently produced art products for the tourism and museum retail market at the 2014 Cairns Indigenous Art Fair. The art products aim to promote Girringun art and stories to a wider audience and generate a new business stream for their communities.

This project is supported by the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland, part of the Department of Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts.

Tie towel design (Gijalordi) by Ethel Murray. Mindi baskets by Emily Murray and ceramic pot by Charlotte Beeron.

All Photos: Courtesy of Girringun Aboriginal Art Center

LEADERSHIP

Girringun worker and administrative assistant Maleisha Leo was recently accepted into the Queensland Indigenous Youth Leadership Program held in Brisbane from June 21 to June 26, 2014. As a participant in the program, Maleisha joined 30 other young Indigenous people to develop leadership skills, engage in democratic processes used in the Queensland Parliament, learn about leadership from a range of inspirational mentors and connect with further leadership and development opportunities and past participants from across the state.

This is a great opportunity for Maleisha and we congratulate her for joining this select group of young and inspirational leaders of the future.

The program is funded by the Dept of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services with additional support from corporate sponsor, Glencore.

RIGHT: Maleisha Leo received her certificate for “The Best Speaker on the Adjournment Debate”, presented by Brett Nutley, Queensland Parliament Indigenous Liaison Officer. Photo: Courtesy of Girringun Aboriginal Art Centre

CHAINSAW GUNDUY SCULPTURE TAKES SHAPE

Girringun artists once again featured well in the recent Cardwell Art Prize Exhibition, with two of five entries attracting major awards. Gulnay Traditional Owner Clarence Kinjun was successful in receiving the Judge’s Award with a traditional Bagu with Jiman, carved from Milky Pine and painted with ochres in the traditional manner. Jiribal Traditional Owner Emily Murray took out first prize in the sculptural section with a hand-built ceramic pot. Other artists Ninney Murray, Nancy Cowan, Daniel Beeron were also represented in the exhibition. Organised by the Hinchinbrook Art Group and this year judged by Ingrid Hoffman, this biannual event attracts artists from across Queensland, so it was a great honour to be so well represented.

Dr Valerie Keenan
Arts Manager,
Girringun Aboriginal Art Centre
MORE WORKSHOPS AT WUJAL WJUAL

Recently, Bana Yirrji Art and Cultural Centre artists at Wujal Wujal have been exploring new horizons in a series of workshops, building on skills developed late last year in printmaking and fabric painting and printing.

This time, local textile artist Bobbie Ruben has worked closely with artists to develop skills in screen-printing and Shireen Talibudeen has delivered ceramic workshops with artists making beads, wall tiles and wheel-thrown pots. The impressive results, from both workshops, speak for themselves.

Vikki Burrows
Art Centre Manager
Bana Yirrji Art and Cultural Centre

LATEST NEWS

In addition to their stalls at the Cairns Indigenous Art Fair (CIAF), IACA member’s work can be found at the following exhibitions during CIAF 2014:

GROUND: New Intaglio Works from Western Cape York
18 July - 24 August 2014
Cairns Regional Gallery - 40 Abbott St, Cairns
LAUNCH: Saturday 26 July, 3:00 – 4:00pm

SOLID! Queensland Contemporary Indigenous Sculpture
27 June – 27 July 2014
Cairns Regional Gallery - 40 Abbott St, Cairns
LAUNCH: Wednesday 23 July, 3:30 – 5:00pm

NYINGKANAM: New One
30 June to 20 September 2014
KickArts - Centre of Contemporary Arts,
96 Abbott Street, Cairns
LAUNCH: Saturday 26 July, 5:30pm

REAR VISIONS: Stories from Home
18 July – 6 August 2014
Canopy Art Centre - 124 Grafton Street, Cairns
LAUNCH: Friday 25 July, 5:30pm

FRESHWATER SALTWATER: Existence Exhibition
23 July – 24 September 2014
UMI ARTS - 335 Sheridan Street, North Cairns
LAUNCH: Wednesday 23 July, 6:00pm

IACA is looking for arts consultants – Join the Register today!

Are you a suitably experienced artist or arts industry consultant interested in working with artists in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island communities? Do you specialise in the arts or providing services to remote areas that would assist art centres in Far North Queensland? Do you have experience delivering professional art workshops in remote locations? IACA is seeking culturally sensitive consultants to register on its database.

Contact IACA staff or visit www.iaca.com.au

Bobbie Ruben with Renaye Hooker and Doreen Creek learning the art of screen printing. Photo by: Vikki Burrows