

FESTIVAL OF
CONTEMPORARY
ABORIGINAL &
TORRES STRAIT
ISLANDER ART
TARNANTHI

MEDIA RELEASE
For immediate release



Pepai Jangala Carroll, Ernabella Arts, Pukatja, South Australia photo: John Montesi, June 2017

Highlights announced for TARNANTHI: Festival of Contemporary Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art

Adelaide, Australia: 2017 TARNANTHI: Festival of Contemporary Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Artistic Director, Nici Cumpston has today announced program highlights for the city-wide Festival, which returns to Adelaide this October.

Encompassing a major exhibition at the Art Gallery of South Australia, an art fair presented at Tandanya, National Aboriginal Cultural Institute and a city-wide festival, TARNANTHI showcases contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art from across the country, providing a platform for artists to share important stories and shed new light on their practise.

In 2017 TARNANTHI will showcase over 1,000 artists at exhibitions at the Art Gallery of South Australia and more than 20 partner venues, and the TARNANTHI Art Fair will feature over 40 art centres and individual artists from across the country.

The Festival's vision, led by Barkindji artist and curator, Cumpston, encourages new beginnings by providing artists with opportunities to create significant new work and extend the practices that they have been developing in studios, art centres, institutions and communities.

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Drawing on artists from across the nation, this year's Festival will have a focus on the seven art centres that span the South Australian Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands.

'These artists are embodying the essence of breaking new ground with their art making. Through years of experience and presenting their work across the country, they are now driving their own practise to ambitious new levels. TARNANTHI presents an opportunity to listen to where the artists want to take their ideas and then support them to achieve their vision,' said Ms Cumpston.

From the APY Lands:

Artists from Ernabella Arts (Pukatja), Tjala Arts (Amata), Mimili Maku Arts (Mimili), Iwantja Arts (Indulkana), Tjungu Palya (Nyapari), Kaltjiti Arts (Fregon) and Ninuku Arts (Kalka) are represented, including the forty-five artists who have come together to work on the monumental APY Lands men's and women's collaborative paintings. These two collaborative paintings will be accompanied by Robert Fielding's black and white photographs portraying the artists involved in the creation of these works.

Suspended from a *kulata* (spear), Mumu Mike Williams' paintings on two repurposed canvas mailbags include handwritten statements in Pitjantjatjara about heritage, ownership and custodianship, as well as the conflict between Commonwealth law and Anangu lore. Meanwhile, senior painter and ceramicist Pepai Jangala Carroll joins fellow Ernabella artist and potter Derek Jungarrayi Thompson for an exhibition titled *Mark and Memory*, following a recent pilgrimage by the pair to their ancestral homelands in the central Western Desert.

The ongoing sharing of cultural knowledge has formed the basis of the APY Lands men's collaborative installation *Kulata Tjuta* (Many Spears). In this major new work, more than six hundred *kulata* (spears), made by men from each of the art centres across the APY Lands, will be suspended from the ceiling of the Art Gallery of South Australia above a group of *piti* (water carriers) made by the women. This large-scale installation depicts the impact of atomic bomb testing in Anangu Lands.

Looking nationally:

From Alice Springs the artists at Yarrenyty Arltere will showcase *Kulila*, a group of embroidered soft sculptures which are self-portraits of the artists.

Over in the community of Maningrida, husband and wife artists Bob Burrawal and Lena Yarinkura are creating an immersive, multimedia installation based on real life events. The work details a terrifying encounter Bob had as a young boy with *Namorodo*, a malevolent shooting star spirit prevalent in and around the rocky escarpment and river country of central and western Arnhem Land.

From far east Western Australia, *NGURRA: Home in the Ngaanyatjarra Lands*, presented by the South Australian Museum, is an exhibition that explores the rich concept of *Ngurra* (home) as expressed by the Ngaanyatjarra people of the Western Desert.

At its heart, TARNANTHI is a series of exhibitions, artists talks, performances and events, showcasing and celebrating contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art.

Partner quotes:

TARNANTHI: Festival of Contemporary Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art is presented by the Art Gallery of South Australia in partnership with BHP and with support from the Government of South Australia.

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South Australian Minister for the Arts Jack Snelling said: 'The South Australian Government is proud to support an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander led, internationally regarded, visual art festival of this scale. TARNANTHI is a unique opportunity to celebrate the cultural diversity of First Nation artists in South Australia and across the Country.

As the gateway to central Australia, we are uniquely placed to present an important cultural event like TARNANTHI that delivers significant economic, education and community benefit.'

Jacqui McGill, Asset President, BHP Olympic Dam said: 'BHP is proud to be involved with TARNANTHI again after the success of the event in 2015. The extension of our partnership for a further five years, means an even bigger celebration – involving greater participation from young people and those from regional areas right across Australia. The partnership provides sustainable economic streams for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples that will make a difference for generations to come. We are excited to make this contribution as part of our long-term commitment to South Australia and our support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.'

The full TARNANTHI Festival program will be announced in August 2017. For further information visit tarnanthi.com.au.

ENDS

MEDIA CONTACTS: For further information and to request interviews and images relating to 2017 TARNANTHI, please contact Claire Martin E claire@articulatepr.com.au, +61 414 437 588 or Marika Lucas-Edwards E lucas-edwards.marika@artgallery.sa.gov.au, +61 8 8207 7156 or +61 407 077 102.

KEY DATES:

- TARNANTHI City Wide Festival | 13-22 October 2017
- TARNANTHI Art Fair | 13-15 October 2017
- TARNANTHI at the Gallery | 13 October 2017 – 28 January 2018

MEDIA IMAGES: Available for download from <http://files.artgallery.sa.gov.au/ftp/marketing/TARNANTHIMediaHighlights.zip>

NOTES:

- TARNANTHI: Festival of Contemporary Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art has been funded until 2021 through a \$17.54 million partnership with BHP, the State Government of South Australia and Art Gallery of South Australia.
- In 2017 TARNANTHI will showcase over 1,000 artists at exhibitions at the Art Gallery of South Australia and more than 20 partner venues, and the TARNANTHI Art Fair will feature over 40 art centres and individual artists from across the country.
- Presented for the first time in 2015, the breadth and diversity of the inaugural TARNANTHI Festival was well received by audiences with total attendances at all TARNANTHI exhibitions and events exceeding 300,000.
- TARNANTHI at the Gallery and the TARNANTHI Art Fair will be presented every year until 2021 and will be supported by biennial city-wide exhibitions and events from October 2017.
- **TARNANTHI at the Gallery | 13 October 2017 – 28 January 2018**
TARNANTHI includes a series of exhibitions, artist talks, performances and events, presented in partnership with key cultural institutions across South Australia. At its heart is an ambitious exhibition of contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art at the Art Gallery of South Australia. This Gallery wide exhibition will present works of art from studios, art centres, institutions and communities from as far east as the Torres Strait to the heart of the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands and beyond.

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- **TARNANTHI Art Fair | 13-15 October 2017**

The TARNANTHI Art Fair presents more than 40 art centres and over 200 artists from across Australia during the Festival's opening weekend. Festival-goers, collectors and art enthusiasts have the opportunity to meet and buy works of art direct from artists. Art production is a key source of income for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and the Art Fair brings together urban, regional, emerging and established artists from across the nation exclusively to Adelaide. Works of art available for sale are priced between \$50 and \$5,000.

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