



A Story of Art and Aboriginal Community Control

Arnhem, Northern and Kimberley Artists (ANKA) acknowledges the extraordinary dedication, service, and vision of the Aboriginal leaders, members, and staff who have maintained and grown the peak body since it started as ANCAAA in 1987; and recognises the service of their non-Indigenous collaborators and supporters. Many people's vision and hard work have also been vital to establishing and maintaining the dynamic network of grass-roots, Aboriginal community-controlled art and culture centres in remote and regional communities across northern and central Australia.

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Terminology: This booklet uses the word Aboriginal to refer to the Indigenous people of Australia. This term is used because the booklet content focuses on mainland Australia's northern and central regions, where the term Aboriginal is most often used. However, ANKA recognises and respects that some of the concepts are likely to also apply to Torres Strait Island peoples.

Cultural Warning: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are warned that this booklet contains images and names of people who have passed away.

Produced: Darwin & Broome, September 2023
Images: All courtesy and copyrite of ANKA unless otherwise stated

Cover Image:
Milingimbi Sea Closure hearing using works from the MECA collection as evidence, Milingimbi c.1978. Detail of photo L-R Willi Walilipa (visible), Charles Manyjarri, Gatijil Djekurra, and Creed Lovegrove.
Photo: David McClay

Introduction

The content of this booklet ‘A Story of Art and Aboriginal Community Control’ comes from a series of information and advocacy panels displayed with the ANKA stall at the August 2023 Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair (DAAF).

The DAAF display and this booklet aim to affirm and celebrate the long-standing history of Aboriginal community control within the remote Aboriginal art and culture sector.

The booklet focuses on ANKA and includes stories about the history of the peak body, but it is not principally a history of ANKA as an organisation. Instead, it highlights the evolution of community control in the sector. It aims to inform current thinking on what's essential to sustain and grow a strong remote Aboriginal art and culture sector, which will still be there for the next generations. Policy and planning, if they are to be effective, need to be genuinely co-designed with Aboriginal people and be informed by a sound understanding of the foundational principles that have made the sector strong and vibrant.

ANKA advocates for two co-designed actions to commence immediately: (1.) A Sector Strengthening Plan for the Remote Indigenous Art and Culture Sector, (2.) a National Indigenous Cultural Policy, These actions need to be informed by (3.) A realistic mapping of the Remote Indigenous Art and Culture Sector ecology.

Realistic sector mapping will strengthen understanding of the breadth of cultural and art activities typically undertaken by community-controlled art and culture centres, and reflect cross-over with other sectors including health, education caring for Country, language, heritage, traditional cultural practice and ceremony.

These actions should complement and build on the new National Cultural Policy Revive (2023). And draw on sector strengthening principles articulated in the National Agreement on Closing the Gap (July 2020) co-designed by The Coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peaks and all Australian governments.

Section One

We Are Standing On Their Names - ANKA Directors 1995 - 2024 pp. 4-6

ANKA pays tribute to the 105 Northern Aboriginal art and culture leaders who have been elected to serve on its board of directors since 1995, enacting the principle that ‘we are stronger together.’

Section Two

A Story of Art and Aboriginal Community Control
Includes five sub-sections:

1. Before 1987 - Introduces the establishment of Aboriginal community-controlled art and culture centres - pp. 7-9

2. ANCAAA - Founded 1987 - Introducing the first peak body for Aboriginal art and culture and the goal of Aboriginal control of Aboriginal art pp. 10-12

3. All Aboriginal Governance 1995 - Illustrates how ANKAAA built full Aboriginal governance pp.13-15

4. Strong Community Control - Discusses principles of community control and its benefits pp.16-18

5. Community Control, Sector Strengthening and Government Policy - Argues for what is needed in the present pp.19-21

Section Three

Notes from the Remote Art and Culture Sector
pp. 23-26

Shares notes from a preliminary sector mapping exercise, which ANKA commenced to inform discussion at its 2022 Annual Conference.

The booklet aims to inform much-needed discussions and timely actions grounded in respect for and understanding of the importance of Aboriginal community control to the Australian remote Indigenous art and culture sector. It is a work in progress and an invitation for conversation and informed action.

WE ARE STANDING ON THEIR NAMES*

ANKA Directors 1995 - 2024

<p>The following tribute acknowledges the dedication of the northern Aboriginal artists and cultural leaders who have served on the ANKA board of directors since 1995.</p>
<p>ANKA was founded in March 1987 as ANCAAA, the Association of Northern and Central Australian Aboriginal Artists, Australia’s first peak body for Aboriginal artists. In 1992 the central regions re-grouped to form Desart, and in 1995 the northern members elected ANKA’s first all-Aboriginal board at a historic all-Aboriginal meeting at Black Point on the Cobourg Peninsula in West Arnhem Land.</p>
<p>The chair of ANKA’s first all-Aboriginal board, Mr Nagarralja Tommy May (Kimberley region), served the organisation in various capacities from 1995 until his passing in 2022. Two other members of the original 1995 board are still currently ANKA directors. Djambawa Marawili AM (Arnhem Land region) who has been chair since 2000 and John Martin Tipungwuti (Tiwi Islands region).</p>
<p>Today we celebrate the outstanding commitment of generations of Aboriginal leaders of Aboriginal art and culture who have come together from the four regions - the Kimberley, Tiwi Islands, Arnhem Land and Darwin-Katherine to speak with one voice.</p>
<p>*This title is taken from the Yolngu Matha word Djalkiri, which speaks about walking together in the footsteps of the ancestors</p>

<p>LEON BANDICHA ALI (2003-2004) Arnhem Land, Maningrida Arts and Culture, Treasurer 2003-2004</p>	<p>ALAN DEDERAR (2011-2012) Kimberley, Mangkaja Arts, Stand-in 2011-2012</p>
<p>ROY ASHLEY (2009-2010) Darwin-Katherine, Djilpin Arts</p>	<p>NORA DHUMUDAL DHAMARRANDJI (1995-1997) Arnhem Land</p>
<p>ELAINE BATHERN (1998-2000) Kimberley, Mabunji Resource Centre Arts & Crafts Gallery, Region Director 1998-2000</p>	<p>JENNIFER DICKENS (2015-2018) Kimberley, Mangkaja Arts, Stand-in 2017-2018</p>
<p>BERNADETTE BAUMGARTEN (1995-2000) Kimberley, Warba Mirdawaji</p>	<p>VALDA DIXON (2009-2010) Darwin-Katherine, Warrayaka Art and Culture Aboriginal Corporation</p>
<p>RICHARD BIRIN BIRIN (2005-2010) Arnhem Land, Bula'bula Arts, Chair 2007</p>	<p>BRIAN ILLORTAMINNI FARMER (2009-2018) Tiwi Islands, Jilamara Arts and Craft Association, Secretary 2011-2012, Treasurer 2013</p>
<p>ANGELINA BOONA (2023-2024) Kimberley, Kira Kiro Artists</p>	<p>DOTTY (DOROTHEA) FEJO (2013-2014) (2021-2022) Darwin-Katherine, Larrakia Nation, Stand-in 2013-2014</p>
<p>ANTHONY BROOKS (1995-1997) Tiwi Islands</p>	<p>MEL FERNANDO (1995-1997) Tiwi Islands, Stand-in (1995-1997)</p>
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<p>JOHN BULUN BULUN (2001-2002) Arnhem Land, Maningrida Arts and Culture</p>	<p>DORA GRIFFITHS (2013-2024) Kimberley, Waringarri Aboriginal Arts, Treasurer 2014, Deputy Chair 2019-2024</p>
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<p>MICHELLE BUSH (2019-2020) Tiwi Islands, Jilamara Arts and Crafts Association, Stand-in 2019-2020</p>	<p>MELBA GUNJARRWANGA (2003-2004)</p>
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<p>ASHLEY HUNTER (1995-1997) Kimberley, Stand-in 1995-1997</p>
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<p>ADRIAN ISAACS (1998-2002) Kimberley, KALACC</p>
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<p>ALAN JOSHUA (JNR) (2009-2018) Darwin-Katherine, Ngukurr Arts, Treasurer 2009-2010, Stand-in 2011-2012, 2015-2016, Secretary 2013</p>
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<p>KIEREN KARRITPUL (2019-2020) Darwin-Katherine, Merrepen Arts</p>
<p>CYRIL JAMES KERINAUIA (2007-2010) Tiwi Islands, Tiwi Designs, Deputy Chair 2009-2010</p>
<p>RAELENE KERINAUIA (2001-2002) Tiwi Islands, Jilamara Arts and Crafts</p>
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<p>ROSIE LA LA (2009-2010) Kimberley, Yaruman Art and Culture</p>
<p>ALFRED LALARA (2011-2012) Arnhem Land, Anindilyakwa Arts</p>
<p>NOELEN DANJIBANA LALARA (2023-2024) Arnhem Land, Anindilyakwa Arts</p>
<p>BELINDA LEE (2001-2002) Darwin-Katherine, Independent artist</p>

<p>GARY (MURA) LEE (2005-2008) Darwin-Katherine, Independent artist, Vice Chair 2007</p>
<p>TONY LEE (2007-2008) Darwin-Katherine, Independent artist, Vice Chair 2008</p>
<p>THERESA LEMON (1995-1997) Darwin-Katherine, Region Director 1995-1997</p>
<p>ANNA LEWIS (2019-2020) Darwin-Katherine, Djilpin Arts, Stand-in 2019-2020</p>
<p>TOM E LEWIS (2007-2008) (2017-2018) Darwin-Katherine, Djilpin Arts, Stand-in 2007, Standin 2008</p>
<p>TINY McCALE (2005-2006) Kimberley, Yarliyl Art Centre, Stand-in 2005-2006</p>
<p>NANCY McDINNY (2005-2006) Darwin-Katherine, Waralungku Arts, Stand-in 2005, Treasurer 2006</p>
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<p>GABRIEL MARALNGURRA (1995-2003) Arnhem Land, Injalak Arts and Crafts, Stand-in 1998- 2000</p>
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<p>SUSAN DJAPPIRI MUNUNGURRUTJI (1998-2000) Arnhem Land, Nambara Arts</p>
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<p>MARK NODEA (2003-2004) Kimberley, Warmun Art Centre</p>
<p>JANGU NUNDHIRRIBALA (2015-2024) Darwin-Katherine, Numbulwar Numburindi Arts, Secretary 2017-2018, Treasurer 2019-2020, Stand-in 2023-2024</p>
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<p>DELORES PARRY (1995-1997) Darwin-Katherine</p>
<p>MARIKA PATRICK (2007-2008) Kimberley, Warmun Art, Secretary 2007</p>
<p>JOHN PETER PILAKUI (2011-2016) Tiwi Islands, Jilamara Arts and Crafts Association</p>
<p>GORDON PUPANGNGAMIRRI (1998-2000) (2011-2012) Tiwi Islands, Tiwi Designs</p>
<p>COLIN PURUNTATMERI (2023-2024) Tiwi Islands, Jilamara Arts and Crafts Association, Treasurer 2023-2024</p>
<p>FRANCESCA PURUNTATAMERI (2013-2014) Tiwi Islands, Munupi Arts and Craft Association, Stand-in 2013-2014</p>
<p>JEDDA PURUNTATAMERI (2013-2024) Tiwi Islands, Munupi Arts and Craft Association, Treasurer 2015-2016, Secretary 2019-2022, Stand-in 2023-2024</p>
<p>PATRICK FREDDY PURUNTATAMERI (2007-2008) Tiwi Islands, Jilamara Arts and Craft Association</p>
<p>ROBERT EDWARD PURANTATMERI (2001-2004) (2011-2012) Tiwi Islands, Munupi Arts and Crafts Association, Stand-in 2011-2012</p>

<p>THECLA PURANTATMERI (2001-2002) Munupi Arts</p>
<p>WALTER ROGERS (2019-2024) Darwin-Katherine, Ngukurr Arts</p>
<p>LILY ROY (2011-2024) Arnhem Land, Milingimbi Arts and Culture, Stand-in 2011-2012, Special Advisor 2017-2018</p>
<p>MARITA SAMBONO (1995-1997) (2005-2006) Darwin-Katherine, Merrepen Arts</p>
<p>ALICE SNAPE (2003-2006) Darwin-Katherine, Coomalie Cultural Centre, Treasurer 2005-2006</p>
<p>MARYANNE STURT (2009-2010) Kimberley, Waringarri Aboriginal Arts</p>
<p>BJ TIMAEPATUA (2001-2006) Tiwi Islands, Tiwi Designs, Vice Chair 2003-2004</p>
<p>BONAVENTURE TIMAEPATUA (1995-1997) Tiwi Islands</p>
<p>FREDDIE TIMMS (2003-2006) (2009-2014) Kimberley, Jirrawun Arts, Stand-in 2013-2014</p>
<p>JOHN BOSCO TIPILOURA (1998-2000) Tiwi Islands, Munupi Arts</p>
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<p>DOUGLAS VIVIAN WARLAPINNI (2015-2016) Tiwi Islands, Tiwi Designs</p>
<p>REX WILFRED (2003-2004) Darwin-Katherine, Independent Artist</p>
<p>EVANGELINE WILSON (2017-2018) Darwin-Katherine, Djilpin Arts, Stand-in 2017-2018</p>
<p>REGINA PILAWUK WILSON (2011-2014) Darwin-Katherine, Durrmu Arts</p>
<p>KEVIN WINUNGUJ (2015-2016) Arnhem Land, Maningrida Art and Culture, Stand-in 2015-2016</p>
<p>PEDRO WONAEAMIRRI (1998-2004) (2017-2018) (2021-2022) Tiwi Islands, Jilamara Arts and Crafts Association, Deputy Chair 2001-2002, Secretary 2003-2004, Stand-in 2017-2018</p>
<p>MICHELLE WOODY (2017-2022) Tiwi Islands, Jilamara Arts and Crafts Association, Treasurer 2017-2018, Stand-in 2021-2022</p>
<p>BRADLEY WYNACK (2023-2024) Kimberley, Yarliyl Art Centre, Stand-in 2023-2024</p>
<p>RONNIE YUNDUN (RY) (2007-2008) Kimberley, Waringarri Aboriginal Arts</p>

Art and Aboriginal Community Control

Before 1987

Establishment of Aboriginal community-controlled art and culture centres

Many of the earliest remote Aboriginal art and culture centres in northern and central Australia started under the auspices of church missions. In acts of self-determination, Aboriginal artists progressively replaced mission control with community control.

Ernabella Arts, established in 1948 at Pukatja in far-north South Australia, was the first Aboriginal art and culture centre. In the late 1960s and 1970s community control became fundamental to the emerging organisational model for the new centres. These collectives were then often called art and craft centres or craft shops.

Establishment of art and culture centres – a chronology from The Art & Craft Centre Story, 1999²

Fig il.2 Establishment of art centres—date (& date of incorporation if applicable)

Date	Art centres
1948	Ernabella Arts (1974)
1967	Bima Wear (1969)
1969	Maningrida Arts & Culture, Tiwi Designs (1980)
1971	Papunya Tula Artists (1971)
1974	Kaltjiti Crafts
1975	Buku-Larrnggay Mulka
1976	Bula'bula Arts (?)
1979	Mimi Arts & Crafts (1979)
1982	Maruku Arts & Crafts (?)
1983	Mangkaja Arts (1993)
1984	Munupi Arts (1990), Warba Mirdawaji (1993)
1985	Iwantja Arts & Crafts, Jukurrpa Artists (1985), Walkatjara Art & Craft, Waringarri Arts, Warlukurlangu Artists (1986)
1986	Merrepen Arts (1990), Warnayaka Art Centre (1996)
1987	Keringke Arts (1989)
1988	Jilamara Arts & Crafts (1989), Warlayirti Artists (1987)
1989	Injalak Arts & Crafts (1989), Nambara Arts & Crafts, Ngunga Designs (1988), Warburton Arts Project
1990	Hermannsburg Potters (1992), Yurrampi Crafts (1991)
1992	Ikuntji Centre, Utopia Awely Batik (1995), Elcho Island Art & Craft
1993	Titjikala Women's Centre, Wugularr Arts Centre
1994	Julalikari Council Art Centre, Warumpi Arts
1995	Ali Curung Women's Centre
1996	Palawa Prints
Not known	Anyinginyi Congress Arts & Crafts

'Art centres are a peculiarly Australian invention like the Hills Hoists or the rotary engine, but few realise how effective they are.' They are 'something that Australia does better than anyone else. It is a model that delivers equitable returns, that allows, cultural intellectual property to enter the mainstream without compromise or exploitation'.

Will Stubbs, Art and Culture Centre Coordinator, Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Centre, Yirrkala, 1995 to current ¹



First Image:
Ernabella, Pukatja, SA, 1961-3. Tjalara Anmanari Nyaningu and Nyukana Daisy Baker. Photo: courtesy Ernabella Arts

Second Image:
Ernabella, Pukatja, SA 1965.
Patjiparan Daisy Wikilyiri and Nyukana Daisy Baker 1965. Photo: courtesy Ernabella Arts

Working together to keep art, country and culture strong



1970's - ABORIGINAL HOMELANDS CENTRE MOVEMENT

Aboriginal people in Northern and Central Australia, on their own initiative, return to live on their ancestral country in increasing numbers.

1970's - CULTURAL REVIVAL

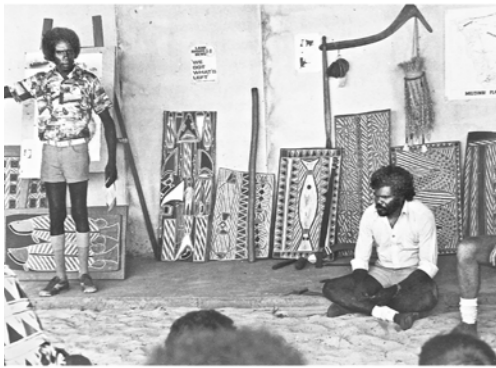
The homelands movement is part of a cultural revival following the assimilation era with the regeneration of Aboriginal languages, ceremonies, cultural knowledge, and relationship to Country. This cultural revival is the foundation of the Aboriginal art renaissance.



1973 THE ABORIGINAL ARTS BOARD SUPPORTS COMMUNITY-CONTROLLED ART ORGANISATIONS

The new Aboriginal Arts Board (AAB) of the Australia Council aims to support community-controlled arts cooperatives in remote communities.

'Utilising a version of the mainstream community arts model, the Aboriginal Arts Board made a radical departure from the existing model by providing communities with independent and targeted resources to employ arts advisers that were directly accountable to the artists.' - Jan Altman, 2005³



Traditionally educated artists Dick Roghsey, Mornington Island (1973-5) and Wanduk Marika, Yirrkala (1975-9), are the AAB's inaugural chairs.

1975 WAVE HILL

Prime Minister Gough Whitlam gave the Gurindji people a lease to part of the vast Wave Hill property in a ceremony at Daguragu (Wattie Creek) – in the first act of transferring the title of land from the Commonwealth of Australia to an Aboriginal community. This was a symbolic day for First Nations people and supporters and a vital first step. It followed the 1966 Wave Hill Walk Off and extended strike (1966-1975) protesting working conditions.

1976 THE ABORIGINAL LAND RIGHTS (NT) ACT

The first Australian government law to legally recognise the Aboriginal system of ownership.

1978

Milingimbi Sea Closure hearing uses works from the Milingimbi Education and Cultural Association MECA collection as evidence to support Yolngu sea rights claims.

First Image:

Tiwi Designs, Bathurst Island, NT, 1974.

L-R, standing, Diana Wood Conroy, Giovanni Tipungwuti, Danny Munkara, Bede Tungutalum, Vivien Kerinauia. Seated Benedicta Palipumini, Miriam Babui, Antoineje Orsto, Annunciata Pilakui. Photo Joseph Conroy. L-R, standing, Diana Wood Conroy, Giovanni Tipungwuti, Danny Munkara, Bede Tungutalum, Vivien Kerinauia. Seated Benedicta Palipumini, Miriam Babui, Antoineje Orsto, Annunciata Pilakui. Photo: Joseph Conroy

Second Image:

Tiwi Designs, Bathurst Island, NT, 1974.

Bede Tungutalum and Giovanni Tipungwuti with print, screen and squeegee. One holds the screen, and the other sweeps the squeegee across the fabric taped to the felt covered table. Photo: Diana Wood Conroy Arts

Third Image:

Milingimbi Sea Closure hearing using works from the MECA collection as evidence, Milingimbi c.1978 L-R Willi Waliilipa, Charles Manydjarri, Gatjil Djekurra, and Creed Lovegrove. Photo: David McClay

Today Milingimbi is one of two places in the Northern Territory where a 'sea closure' applies under the Aboriginal Land Rights Act (1978). This closure extends seawards around the island of Milingimbi for 2 km from the mean low water mark. Traditional Owners have exclusive access to closed seas. Visitors must ask Traditional Owners' permission before entering 'sea closure' areas to keep sacred sites safe and protect people from danger.

Grassroots Art & Culture Centres Come Together

In the 1980's artists and art and culture centres from across Central and Northern Australia come together in various locatons, including Maningrida (NT), Alice Springs (NT) and One Arm Point/ Broome (WA), to share knowledge and plan shared advocacy and the formation of a peak body through which the cooperatives could be stronger together.

'... a loose association of federally funded community artist cooperatives was formed in Arnhem Land, largely led by Peter Cooke based in Maningrida. The organisation was similar in purpose to other industry associations: to discuss 'the market', to set ethical and employment standards and to define its role in that particular historical (colonial) moment...'

Djon Mundine OAM, founding member of ANCAAA, Arts Backbone, Vol 12, Issue 1, August 2021

Bardayal Lofty Nadjamerrek AO (2006-2009), Isaiah Nagurrurrba (1969-2022) and Gabriel Maralingurra were among the Arnhem Land artists who attended

early peak meetings.

Fighting for Community Control

In the late 1980's the Federal Government's marketing body Inada Holdings Pty Ltd, based in Canberra, proposed to take over the employment of staff in art and culture centres.

Djon Mundine recalls that nationally centralised employment;

'was against the principle of self-determinaJon, in that it took control of visual art expression from local community artists. This would have in effect given 'the company' a monopoly over Aboriginal art production and deprived a grass-roots voice of their artistic expression.'

Remote artists from across central and northern Australia came together to fight for community control of their art and culture centres.

'A number of meetings, which included the communities of the desert as well as the Top End, were hurriedly organised and a press conference was held in 1987 to announce the formation of the Association of Northern and Central Australian artists ANCAAA...'

Djon Mundine, Arts Backbone Volume 12: Issue 1 August

Footnotes pp.7-9

¹ Will Stubbs, quoted in Jeremy Eccles 'Award for Art Co-ordinator', Aboriginal Art Directory, 11.03.15, <https://news.aboriginalartdirectory.com/2015/03/award-for-art-coordinator.php>

² Felicity Wright and Frances Morphy eds. The Art & Craft Centre Story Volume 1, ATSIIC, Canberra, 1999, p.26. Figure II

³ Jon Altman 'Brokering Aboriginal Art: A critical perspective on marketing, institutions and the state', Kenneth Myer Lecture in Arts & Entertainment Management, 2005 p.4

The Environment

1963 YIRRKALA BARK PETITIONS

The historic Yirrkala Bark Petitions were presented to the Australian Parliament's House of Representatives in 1963 by the Yolngu of North East Arnhem Land in a formal attempt to have their land rights recognised. This was the first-time documents incorporating Aboriginal ways of representing relationships to land were recognised by parliament. The 1963 Bark Petitions prepared the ground for land rights and demonstrated to the Australian Government the link between culture, country, art and Law.

1973 SELF DETERMINATION ERA

The Labour Party under Gough Whitlam introduces policies of self-determination for Aboriginal people replacing previous assimilation policies.

ANCAAA - Founded 1987



Founding of ANCAAA - Australia's first Aboriginal art and culture peak organisation

Australia's first peak organisation for Aboriginal art and culture is established in 1987. At a meeting on March 9th and 10th at the NT Museum of Arts and Sciences, representatives of 16 art and culture centres from NT, WA and SA forms the Association of Northern and Central Australian Aboriginal Artists (ANCAAA). A press release calls this the largest-ever meeting of Aboriginal artists and their representatives.

The art and culture centres sought to protect 'the principle of independence' – calling for 'independently owned and controlled art and crafts centres' under the leadership of the artists themselves. The press release stated that:

'the production and marketing of Aboriginal art should be controlled by artists through their own art centres based within their own communities and not through a remote national organisation based in Sydney or Canberra.'

At the March 10 meeting the first principle of ANCAAA as a new peak body was determined as being:

Objective 1: That Aboriginal art is controlled by Aboriginal People.

The meeting included both separate and joint sessions for Aboriginal artists and art advisors (largely non-Indigenous). And a steering committee of Aboriginal artists was appointed.



'Mr Alfred Gungupun of the Ramingining Crafts Centre said 'Aborigines wanted to control the sale of their own art. "We can't do it ourselves. We can talk about it and do what the community says. We can listen to our own councils." '

Image:

Northern Territory News, Wednesday March 11, 1987

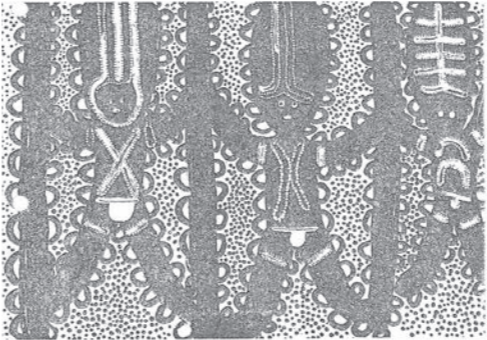
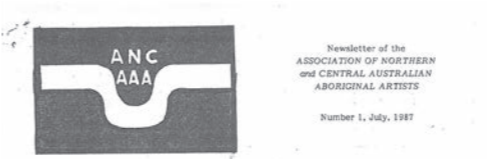
ANCAAA steering committee representatives, appointed March 10th 1987

Dennis Graham, Tennant Creek (Chair)
Jack Wun Wun, Maningrida
Joe Edgar, Broome
Fred Ashley, Katherine
Norah Bindul, Katherine
Alfie, Raminginni

Advisors for the Steering Committee are:
Kathy Barns, Utopia
Martin Hardie, Mimi, Katherine

From: Minutes of Arts and Crafts Meeting in
Darwin 9th & 10th of March 1987

By July 1987 ANCAAA represented the interests of artists in 20 art and culture organisations in the NT, WA and SA.



Welcome - this is the first issue of your newsletter, and like ANCAAA itself, the success of the newsletter depends upon you. As you are aware, ANCAAA was formed on March 11, 1987, at a meeting of artists and art advisers in Darwin. It now represents the interests of artists of the following organisations:-

Tiwi Pima Art (Bathurst Island)
Tiwi Designs (" ")
Tiwi Pottery (" ")
Maningrida Arts and Crafts
Ramingining Arts
Buku Larrnggay (Yirrkala)
Mimi Arts & Crafts (Katherine)
Waringarri Arts (Kununurra)
Goolarabooloo Arts (Broome)
Marra Worra Worra (Fitzroy Crossing)
Wanang Ngari Arts (Derby)
Wariukurlangu Artists (Yuendumu)
Utopia Batik
Papunya Tula Artists
Maruku Arts (Uluru)
Aparawatatja Arts & Craft (Pregon)
Ernabella Batik
Tangentyere (Alice Springs)
Anyinginyi Congress (Tennant Creek)
Balgo Wariyirri Artists

Also affiliated with ANCAAA are:

Boomalili Aboriginal Artists Residents Co-operative (Sydney)
Birukmarri Gallery (Fremantle)
Raintree Gallery (Darwin)

Regional Meetings

Between 1987 and 1992, ANCAAA established a system of holding annual face-to-face regional meetings for each of its three regions before the membership came together for the AGM. For example, in 1991 regional meetings were held in Broome (the Kimberley region), Darwin (Top End region) and Alice Springs (Central Australian region) and the AGM in Darwin.

This system of regional general meetings before the AGM allowed voices from the ground in diverse communities to be heard locally and shared cross-regionally. This representative system is continued today by ANCAAA's children ANKA and Desart.

The Environment

1987 RETURN TO COUNTRY - THE ABORIGINAL HOMELANDS MOVEMENT IN AUSTRALIA

The (Blanchard) House of Representation Inquiry report was released in March 1987, in the same month that ANCAAA started. Return to Country identified the Homelands Movement as an Aboriginal initiative intimately linked to the Aboriginal art renaissance, which flourished together with the regeneration of ceremony, language and cultural tradition. The Aboriginal Arts Board informed the review that of the 5,000 Aboriginal people involved in artistic production, a significant number lived on homeland centres.

1989 (ALTMAN) REVIEW OF THE ABORIGINAL ARTS AND CRAFTS INDUSTRY Report.

ANCAAA lobbied the Australian Government in August 1986 to commission evidence-based research for the industry. The review, chaired by economist Jon Altman with Peter Yu and Chris McGuigan, informed the industry for many years.

The Forming of Two Peaks - ANKAAA & Desart

At the May 1992 ANCAAA Central Australian Aboriginal Arts Conference ANCAAA decides to form into two distinct peaks.

Desart was established in 1992 and incorporated in 1993 focusing on the Central Desert (NT, SA, WA). ANCAAA evolves to become the Association of Northern Kimberley and Arnhem Aboriginal Artists (ANKAAA) focused on the northern Top End (WA and NT).

Both organisations are formed by and embody strong Aboriginal communities of interest spanning state and territory borders.

First Image:

ANCAAA Newsletter 1, July 1987
Front Cover: Traditional Wangkajunga painting July, 1987 by David Downs, Fitzroy Crossing, W.A. ochre on canvas

Second Image:

ANCAAA Affiliated Art Centres
July, 1987

Aboriginal Voices Will Give us Power

Between 1987 and 1995 ANCAAA explored different models of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people working together under the objective of ‘Aboriginal Control of Aboriginal Art’.

By 1995, outspoken objections to accepting non-Indigenous art advisors as peak body members and corporation directors was growing. And the stark contradiction of having an elected board, which was sometimes primarily non-Indigenous, was evident.

The statement ‘Aboriginal voices, not white voices will give it (the peak body) power’ was recorded in meeting minutes on the ANCAAA extraordinary meeting, Darwin 21st and 22nd March, 1995.

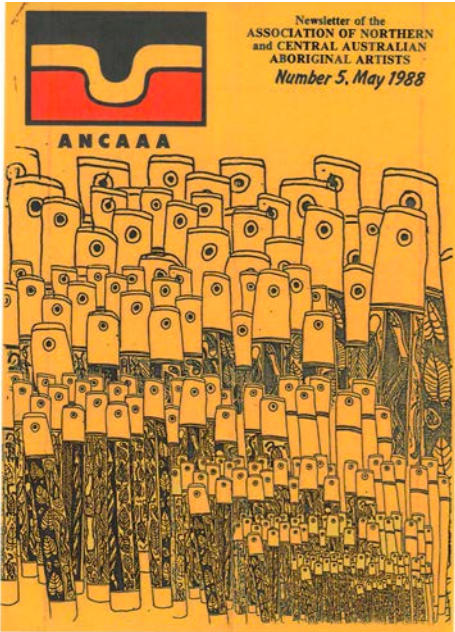
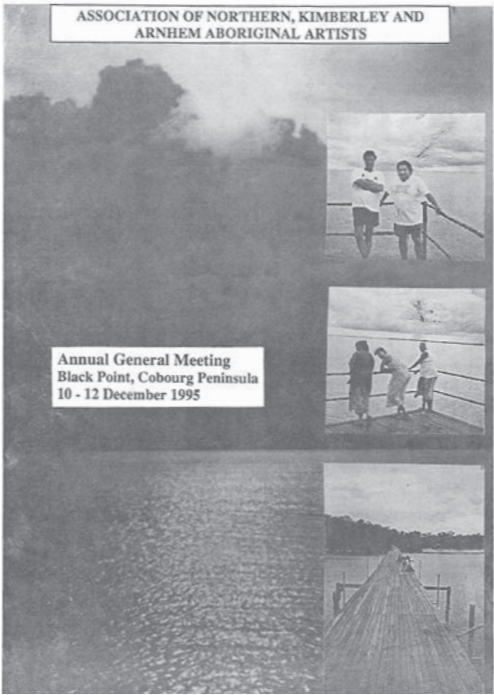


Image:

Front cover of ANCAAA Newsletter 5, May 1988 with image of the Aboriginal Memorial from Ramingining with 200 burial poles Installed at the Sydney Biennale in May before going to its permanent home at the National Gallery in Canberra.

All Aboriginal Governance 1995

Affirming community control - Coburg Peninsula 1995



In December 1995, the newly named ANKAAA - Association of Northern, Kimberley and Arnhem Aboriginal Artists, held a historic AGM at Black Point on the remote Coburg Peninsula in West Arnhem Land. It was the peak’s first all-Aboriginal meeting. Coming together on the Country of senior TO Nelson Muluninj, the members established new foundations for ‘Aboriginal control of Aboriginal art’:

- ANKAAA members would all be Aboriginal
- ANKAAA’s governing committee would be all-Aboriginal

The Rule Book directed effective regional representation with annual regional meetings before the AGM and board directors elected from the four regions the Kimberley, Arnhem Land, the Tiwi Islands and Katherine-Darwin.

With this new governance structure, the members established foundations for strong, long-term, grass-roots Aboriginal leadership and effective collaboration across a vast geographic area and over 50 different Aboriginal language and cultural groups.

At Cobourg Peninsula, outstanding art and culture leaders were also elected to the board who would contribute to leadership for nearly three decades.

Wangkajunga and Walmajirri elder, Mr Ngarralja Tommy May from the Kimberley, was elected as Chairperson and remained in the role until 2001 before continuing as a director and advisor until his passing in 2022.

Yolngu Madarrpa Clan leader Djambawa Marawili (then known as Terry Miniyuwany Marawili) from Arnhem Land became a director and worked closely alongside Mr May before becoming Chairperson in 2001. He has continued as Chair until the present.

John Martin Tipungwuti from the Tiwi Islands joined the first all-Aboriginal board and is again a director in 2019-2024.



‘ANKAAA is a voice of those artists who are in their own land, sitting at home under the tree. ANKAAA gets the message from them and shares it and talks for their rights, because they cannot go and meet the government but ANKAAA can talk for the artists.’

Djambawa Marawili, Chairman, ANKAAA, 2008

First Image:

All Aboriginal ANKAAA AGM at Black Point, Cobourg Peninsula, West Arnhem Land, 1995

Second Image:

Mr Ngarrjala Tommy May at the 2015 ANKA Annual Conference. Mr May was elected Chair of ANKA’s first all Aboriginal board at the 1995 Cobourg Peninsula AGM.

ANKA’s first all-Aboriginal board, elected at Black Point, Cobourge Peninsula in 1995 represented artists from the four regions.

Arnhem Land
Terry Miniyuwany Marawilli
Gabriel Maralngurra
Nora Dhumudal Dhamarrandji

Darwin Katherine
Theresa Lemon
Delores Parry
Marita Sambono

Kimberley
Tommy May
Bernadette Baumgarten
Vicki Butters
Ashley Hunter - stand-in

Tiwi Islands
Anthony Brooks
Bonaventure Timaepatua
John Martin Tipungwuti
Mel Fernando - stand-in

ASSOCIATION OF NORTHERN, KIMBERLEY AND ARNHEM
ABORIGINAL ARTISTS
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
BLACK POINT, COBOLING PENINSULA
10-12 DECEMBER 1995

Ashley Hunter,
Nora Dhumudal Dhamarrandji, Molly
Munkara,
Djon Mandine,
Terry Miniyuwany Marawili, Gabriel
Maralngurra,
John Martin Tipungwuti, Anthony
Brooks,
0822
Bonaventure Timaepatua, Marita
Sambono,
0822
Theresa Lemon,
Delores Parry,
Tiffany Louise Morich, Heather Carter,
Donna Wilson,
Mel Fernando,
Marie Evelyn Pautimi,
Joy Pedersen,
Bernadette Baumgarten, Vicki Butters,
Tommy May,
Fiona Davey,
Others Present:-

One Arm Point, Via Broome, WA 6725
PO Box 1688, Nhulunbuy, NT
Bima Wear, Ngait Bathurst Island, NT Rammingining, Via
Darwin NT
Yirrkala Budykulara via Nhulunbuy, NT Oespelli
(Kunbarlanja), via Darwin, NT 0822 Milikapili, Melville
Island via Darwin, NT 0822 Pularumpi, Garden Point,
Melville Island, NT
Ngait, Bathurst Island, NT 0822
Daly river community, PMB Daly River, NT
CMB, Peppimenarti, via Darwin NT 0822 PMB Daly
River, NT 0822
481 Crawford Street, Roebourne, WA 6718
PO Box 117, Fitzroy Crossing, WA 6765
C/- PO Box 117, Fitzroy Crossing, WA 6765 Ngait,
Bathurst Island, NT 0822
Ngait, Bathurst Island, NT 0822
PO Box 89, Derby, WA, 6728
PO Box 240, Roebourne, WA 6718
PO Box 130, Halla Creek, WA 6770
C/- PO Box 167, Fitzroy Crossing, WA
One Arm Point, via Broome, WA 6725

John Paterson, ATSC Commissioner
Tomasina Mann, ATSC Commissioner
Christine Christophersen, ANKAAA Coordinator
Darcy Crooks, Consultant to ANKAAA
Kerry Rogers, ANKAAA staff

Commitment to Aboriginal Leadership of Aboriginal Art

‘My strongest reflection on ANKA’s history over the years is of former chairperson Mr May’s positive determination about Aboriginal people having control of their own art centre management and sharing culture through art. A legacy that Djambawa Marawili has continued to build on and strengthen.’

Karen Mills, Darwin, 2012. Arts Backbone, Vol 12. Issue 1. August 2012 – 25th Anniversary edition

The Enviroment

1994 ATSC REPORT ON THE FUTURE OF ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER ARTS AND CULTURAL INDUSTRIES

The Visual Arts, Crafts, and Design section of the report emphasises the crucial role of culture in defining strategies. An executive member of the Aboriginal Cultural Foundation (ACF) highlighted:

‘Our culture is our backbone, and our foundation. The ceremony is the centre of our culture; everything comes from ceremony – our painting, our languages, our songs, our dances – and our sense of responsibility for our fellow men and women. If we lose our culture we will be a lost people. We must keep it and practice it and teach it. If our young people do not learn from ceremony, they will lose their unique identity – their sense of self-worth because they are unique – and become just like other people. Then, they will be useless, in their own eyes and others. They will be bossed around by outside people – outsiders to our culture.’

1996-97 NGURRARA, THE GREAT SANDY DESERT CANVAS & LAND RIGHTS

Guided by then ANKA Chairperson Wangkjunga and Walmajarri elder Mr. Ngarrjala Tommy May, forty-three artists painted the Ngurrara Canvas II at Pinnini Outstation in the Great Sandy Desert. This vast 8 x 10-meter artwork, created during the 1997 Ngurrara Native Title Tribunal hearing, accurately depicts their lands and sacred Jila (water holes) and was accepted as crucial evidence in the ultimately successful legal claim.

1997 THE SALTWATER COLLECTION & SEA RIGHTS

In 1997, the Saltwater Collection became a powerful representation of sea rights. It consisted of 80 bark paintings created by 47 Yolngu cultural leaders from 15 clans and 18 homeland communities, showcasing their ancient relationships to sea country. Madarrpa Clan leader and ANKAA director Djambawa Marawili AM spearheaded the project. Works in this collection played a significant role as evidence in the successful Blue Mud Bay Federal High Court sea rights case.

We made ANKA into an Aboriginal corporation properly led by Aboriginal people

by Djambawa Marawili AM and Mr Ngarralja T May

Statement for ANKA’s 25th anniversary

Darwin, 10 August 2012*

We made ANKA* into an Aboriginal corporation properly lead by Aboriginal people. This is important because:

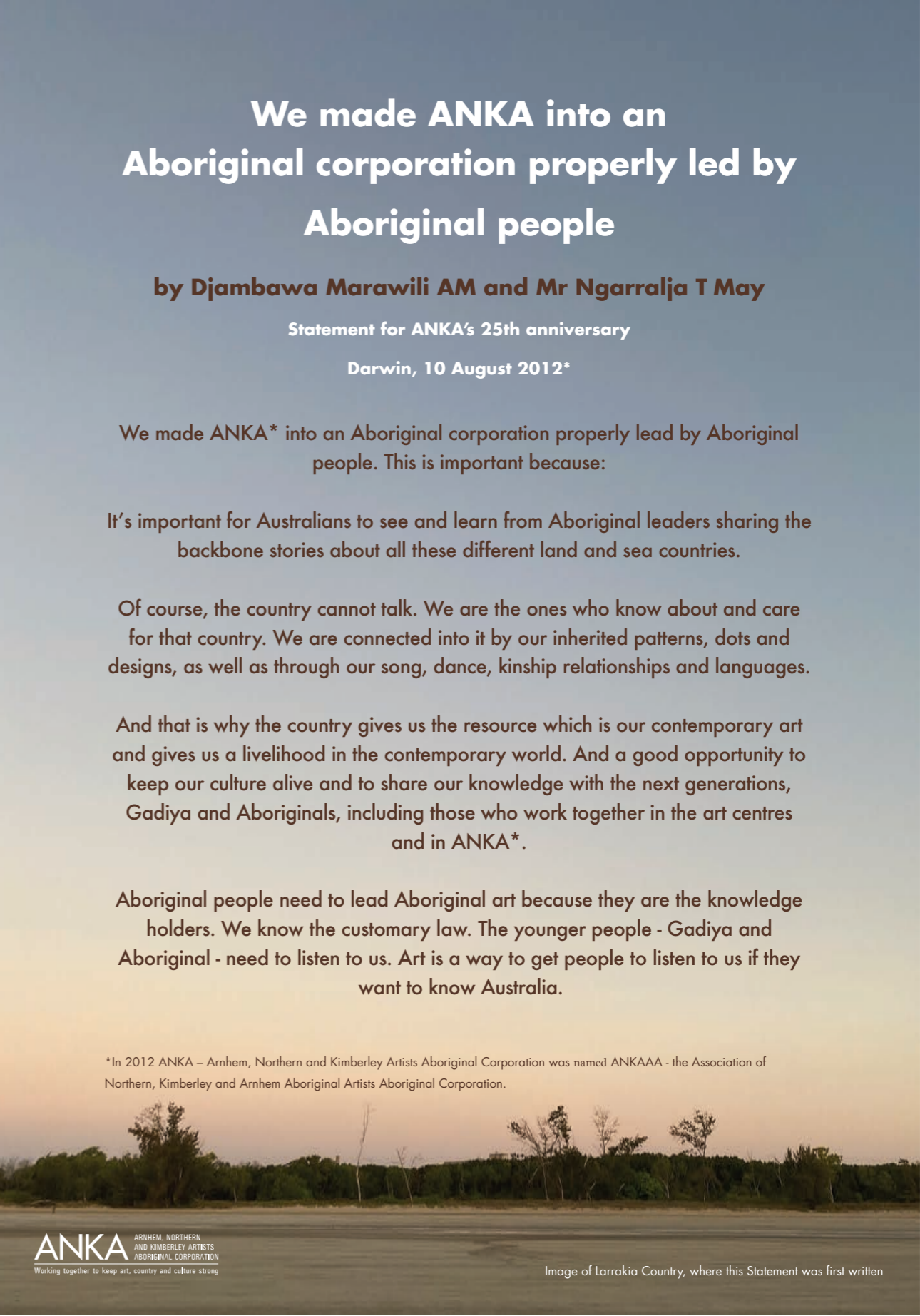
It’s important for Australians to see and learn from Aboriginal leaders sharing the backbone stories about all these different land and sea countries.

Of course, the country cannot talk. We are the ones who know about and care for that country. We are connected into it by our inherited patterns, dots and designs, as well as through our song, dance, kinship relationships and languages.

And that is why the country gives us the resource which is our contemporary art and gives us a livelihood in the contemporary world. And a good opportunity to keep our culture alive and to share our knowledge with the next generations, Gadiya and Aboriginals, including those who work together in the art centres and in ANKA*.

Aboriginal people need to lead Aboriginal art because they are the knowledge holders. We know the customary law. The younger people - Gadiya and Aboriginal - need to listen to us. Art is a way to get people to listen to us if they want to know Australia.

*In 2012 ANKA – Arnhem, Northern and Kimberley Artists Aboriginal Corporation was named ANKAAA - the Association of Northern, Kimberley and Arnhem Aboriginal Artists Aboriginal Corporation.



ANKA ARNHEM, NORTHERN AND KIMBERLEY ARTISTS ABORIGINAL CORPORATION
Working together to keep art, country and culture strong

Image of Larrakia Country, where this Statement was first written

Strong Community Control

Art and Culture Centres

Community control of remote Aboriginal art and culture centres was a foundational principal from the early years of the Aboriginal art movement. The ideal informed the Aboriginal Arts Board's pioneering support for the remote Aboriginal art and culture sector in the 1970's. Principles of community control and linked concepts of self - determination remain fundamental to the identity of remote art and culture centres.

ANKA believes that structures of community control of art and culture centres need to be appreciated, nurtured, and reinvested in to ensure a healthy sector.

Peak Bodies

Australia's two oldest and largest peak bodies for Aboriginal art and culture, ANKA and Desart emerged from a grassroots struggle for community control, which led to the formation of ANCAAA in 1987. These Aboriginal governed entities are umbrella organisations that connect artists and art centres across the vast expanses of remote central and northern Australia, traversing state and territory borders.

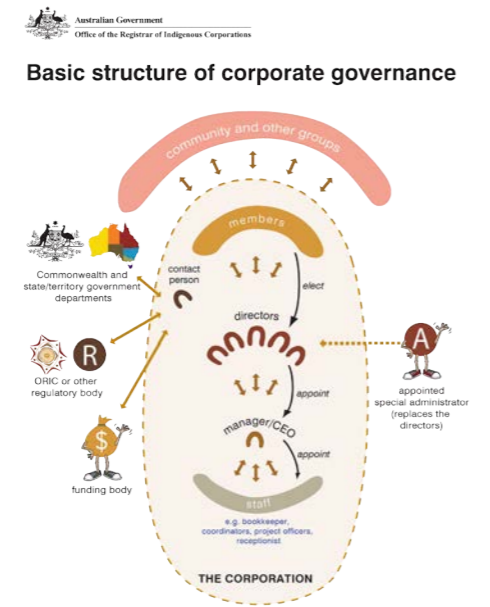
Both ANKA and Desart have a structure of regional general meetings of members, preceding the AGM. This structure allows them to support, listen to and amplify the voices of remote art and cultural practitioners on the ground in communities and strengthens their capacity to communicate a unified message. Within ANKA the Aboriginal members elect three directors and a stand-in director from each region bi-annually.

Today ANKA and Desart are joined by more recent community controlled peak bodies - Anangu Ku Arts, UMI Arts, IACA and AACHWA.

Aboriginal Governance and Community Control

Aboriginal governance systems have been practiced in Australia since time immemorial and have informed one of the world's most sustainable cultures.

Today contemporary corporate governance structures provide a backbone for effective community control. ANKA uses and promotes the Basic Structure of Corporate Governance taught by ORIC - The Office for the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations. The chart illustrates structural relationships which enable community control.



ANKA holds that good governance is central to empowering communities of artists, by giving them greater control over the decisions which affect their lives.

‘Community Control is an act of self-determination.’

The National Agreement on Closing the Gap, July 2020.
The Coalition of Peaks and Australian Governments

‘ANKA values walking side by side, non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal people - no one in front, no one behind - that way we are both learning from each other; respecting and caring for each other. This is two way learning.’

ANKA Values Statement - What is True and Important to Us, Members and board of directors, 2007, updated 2021.

‘I would like to speak to the non-Indigenous people who collaborate with us, who assist us to work with force and achieve recognition. Neither of us, Yolngu or napaki is strong on our own: we must work together to achieve our aims. We welcome non-Indigenous people to come and work with us and learn from us – just as we can learn from you. ’

Djambawa Marawili AM Madayin: Eight Decades of Aboriginal Australian Bark Paintings from Yirrkala, New York, 2022,p.47



ANKA Board of Directors, Crab Claw NT, April 2023

Image:

ANKA members come together annually at the ANKA AGM.

‘We need wider Australia to properly understand that in the homelands, in our communities on country, we are caring for the oldest living culture on earth; and we are the only people qualified to look after this global inheritance. These are not just words about a distant imagined past; this is reality. We need support for our self-determination to care for the seeds of a shaped future for all Australians.’

Djambawa Marawili AM, ANKA Chairman, Madarrpa Clan Leader, ‘Support For Cultural Legacy’, 201812. Issue 1. August 2012 – 25th Anniversary edition

Indigenous peoples have the right to participate in decision-making matters, which would affect their rights, through representatives chosen by themselves in accordance with their own procedures.....

UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Article 18

Image:

ANKA's Rule Book outlines 4 regional meetings annually before the AGM.

ANKAAA Regional General Meetings 2014

Each year, ANKAAA holds Regional General Meetings in each of its four regions before the AGM. These meetings are central to Indigenous governance and leadership and an important way for artists, art workers and coordinators from different community Art Centres to connect and discuss industry priorities.

Elections for the ANKAAA Board of Directors take place at the regional meetings every second year. Four directors are elected from each region, to make up the full Board of twelve directors and four stand-in directors.



ANKAAA Tiwi Regional General Meeting 2014

In 2014, following changes to the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC) rulings, Indigenous members needed to have signed an individual membership form, approved by the ANKAAA board, to be eligible to vote*. ANKAAA staff, worked hard all year, with the incredible support of Art Centre coordinators and arts workers, to achieve a high level of formally signed forms, ensuring the community could actively participate and choose who they would like to represent their regions.

The **Tiwi Regional General Meeting** was held in early September at the Tiwi Enterprises Conference Room, Ngau, Bathurst Island. Staff and artists from Jilamara Arts, Munupi Art and Tiwi Design identified and discussed a number of regional priorities including: cultural tourism, cross-generational engagement, cultural revival and reinforcement, innovation, digital archiving, governance training and ongoing funding.



ANKAAA Darwin/Katherine Regional General Meeting 2014, outside The Godinmayin Yijard Rivers Arts and Culture Centre, Katherine

Eight Art Centres attended the **Darwin/Katherine Regional General Meeting** which took place in late September.



Breakout groups discussing regional priorities ANKAAA Darwin/Katherine Regional General Meeting 2014



ANKAAA Director Peter Jolly chairs the Katherine/Darwin Regional General Meeting 2014

2014 at the Godinmayin Yijard Rivers Arts and Culture Centre, Katherine. As well as updates on the activities of each Art Centre over the year, two open discussions took place. Topics included identifying ways to keep working together to keep art, culture and country strong and discussions on Art Centre priorities for 2015. Two guests attended. Peter Shephard delivered a governance workshop as a professional development

opportunity for participants and Nerale Arnold, Regional Manager, Northern Territory Indigenous Community Volunteers gave a presentation on the programs the organisation offers and how they can assist Art Centres.



Welcome to Country Smoking Ceremony, Mangkaja Arts, Kimberley Regional General Meeting 2014

Mangkaja Arts hosted the **Kimberley Regional General Meeting** at Fitzroy Crossing in early October, 2014. A Welcome to Country with smoking ceremony was given by Senior Bunuba man, George Brooking, outside the Mangkaja Art Centre as well as a welcome by Mangkaja Chairman, Terry Murray. Over 70 people from 10 Art Centres attended, including ANKAAA



ANKAAA Kimberley Regional General Meeting, Mangkaja Arts, Fitzroy Crossing 2014

Chairman, Djambawa Marawili AM, who made a special trip from Anhem Land. Also present was an important Elder and previous ANKAAA Chairman, Mr Ngarraja Tommy May, who Djambawa acknowledged as 'The Father of ANKAAA'.



ANKAAA Deputy Chair Gabriel Nadea with Peggy Patrick from Warman Arts, Kimberley Regional General Meeting 2014



Kurla dancing at Kimberley Regional General Meeting 2014

Presentations by a number of Art Centres on their achievements of the past 12 months were combined with group discussions on priorities and concerns for Art Centres and artists. There were also special talks by Terry Murray, on the Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre (KALACC), Geraldine Henrici, Art Gallery of Western Australia, on the Desert, River, Sea Project and Chris Griffiths, Richard Thomas and Gabriel Nadea, on the Kimberley Aboriginal Artists (KAA).

On the evening of the first day of the meeting, approximately 100 people enjoyed a Kimberley style cook-up at the Art Centre, which included a traditional Kurla dance ceremony and the screening of some locally-made films. As part of the dance ceremony, Mr Ngarraja Tommy May (former ANKAAA Chairman) presented ANKAAA Chairman Djambawa Marawili AM (North-East



Terry Murray, Chair Mangkaja Arts and Mr Ngarraja Tommy May, Mangkaja Arts, present the ANKAAA Chair Djambawa Marawili AM with a ceremonial headdress

Anhem Land) with a Kurla headdress to symbolise the long standing good relationship between the Kimberley of WA and the NT within ANKAAA, strong continuity of leadership, and alignment of fundamental cultural priorities.



Anhem Regional General Meeting 2014 attendees

The **Anhem Regional General Meeting** was held at Mount Bundy Station, Adelaide River south of Darwin on 11 November, 2014 – the day before the ANKAAA AGM and Annual Conference. Staff and artists from seven Art Centres attended to share their news and to discuss priorities for Anhem Art Centres. Topics raised included increased lobbying of government to understand community needs via actual visits to communities, better access to accredited training in a range of skills that are relevant and useful, cultural tourism, and sustainable operational funding.



Imhael Marika (Buku Lamagay/Mulka) discussing regional priorities at Anhem Regional General Meeting 2014

1. Sharon Angella Penangke (Shallow Research Centre) & Rusty Petes (Warman Art Centre)
2. Lily Roy (Milingimbi Art & Culture/ Yilan Homeland) with Lynette & Daphne (Bulu Bulu Arts)
3. 2017 AGM lead by ANKA Board
4. ANKA Board meets with Purple House, CEO, Sarah Brown
5. Ioff John Saunders (ANKA), Cathy Carreras (Warranger Arts), Tonya Jan Vaseas (Capewaryk Culture & Arts), Dion Teasdale and Sophie Iovincamp (ANKA), Stephanie Ro & Gabriel Nadea (Warman Art)
6. Members of ANKA Annual Conference 2017
7. Dance Ground, ACIRE
8. Regeneration Dancers
9. Interregional dancing
10. Workshops
11. Cultural Discussion, 'What Would a Museum Look Like Designed by Us?' Ioff, Andrea Nield (NT Gov Architect), Philip Vassiliou (CEO), Kelle Javong (CDL), Vassiliou Rogers (Ngukuru Arts), Harold Farber (Ngukuru Design), Corp. Int., Chant, Djambawa Marawili AM (ANKA, Chair)
12. Wyatt & Lynette Nangoodah (Mangkaja Arts, ANKA ANVEP 2016), ochre painting
13. Ochre painting with comb, Tiwi
14. Phyllis Thomas (Warman Art Centre) painting with ochre
15. Crushing ochre
16. Lynette Nangoodah (Mangkaja Arts, ANKA ANVEP 2016) introducing session Aboriginal leadership in the Museum Sector
17. Industry Information Stalls
18. Stanley Taylor (Mowarrum Arts, ANKA ANVEP 2013)
19. Presentation: 'Aboriginal Leadership through Strong Governance' Western Desert Outback, Jackson Ross (Board member) & Sarah Brown (CEO)
20. Brian Farmer (Jilamara Arts, ANKA Board) & Balinda Foster (ANKA)
21. Presentation, Forum 1: 'Aboriginal Leadership in the Museum Sector', Sharon Angella Penangke (Shallow Research Centre)
22. Michelle Vaseas (Jilamara Arts Chair, ANKA Board) ready for dancing
23. Regina Wilson (Dumma Arts) and Dora Griffiths (Warranger Arts, Chair, ANKA Board)
24. Maize labors & Ancestral Ancestry (Individually-owned Arts)
25. Daphne (Bulu Bulu Arts)
26. Art Business: Bill Ivory (Pels and Museums, NT Gov), NT Gov, Arts Trail
27. Dion Teasdale, ANKA Arts Worker Program 5 Yr Plan consultation
28. Jennie Goye-Arns (Babbarra Women's Centre) & Simone Chetty (Koro-Kalamburu Arts Project), weaving workshop
29. Turning the Tide on Marine Debris: Ghost Net Weaving Workshop
30. & 31. Weaving workshop
31. Inara Wilson (Dumma Arts), weaving workshop
32. Conference venue
33. Art Business: 'Stories Art Money' (SAM) database workshop
34. Regina Wilson (Dumma Arts) & Tiwi friends ready for dancing
35. Peggy Mowson (Warranger Arts), pamphlets from Info Stalls

ANKA Annual Conference and AGM 2017

Australian Centre for Indigenous Knowledge and Education (ACIKE), Charles Darwin University, Darwin



australian Centre for Indigenous Knowledge and Education

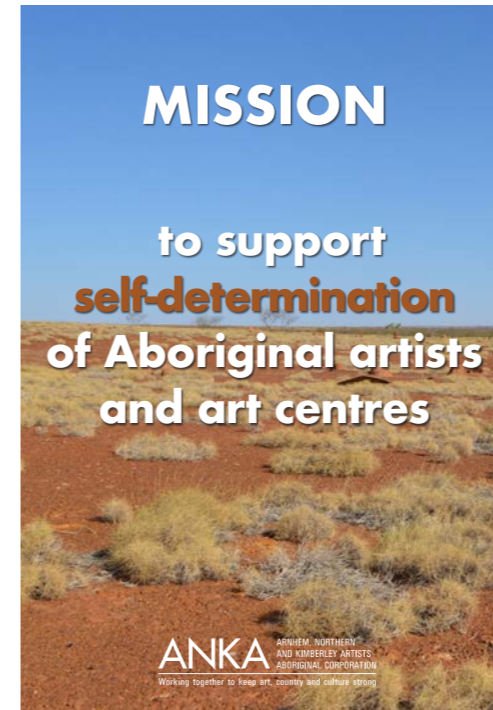
Community Control, Sector Strengthening and Government Policy

ANKA Mission and Vision

The ANKA directors recently updated the organisation's Vision and Mission.

The new Mission recalls the first objective of ANCAAA in 1987 – 'Aboriginal control of Aboriginal art,' by affirming the importance of self-determination and community control.

The new Vision reflects the conviction that 'you can't have strong art without strong culture,' highlighting the foundational importance of the inseparable connection between art, country and culture.



Community Control and Revive Cultural Policy (2023)

The Australian Government's recently released their five-year cultural policy, Revive; A Place for Every Story, A Story for Every Place (2023). The policy strongly affirms the position of first nations art and culture at the forefront of Australia's national culture and makes broad-brush commitments to large institutions. However, whilst speaking broadly of self-determination, the policy is entirely silent about Aboriginal community control in the remote art and culture sector.



Acknowledging the maturity of the remote Aboriginal Art and Culture sector and its long history of community control should be the starting point for policymakers. Without authentic partnerships with the grass-roots community controlled sector government responses will continue to be topdown and miss accounting for vital components that make the sector socially, culturally and economically successful.

The Closing the Gap framework is a powerful co-design model between governments and the community-controlled sector. It emphasises the development of Sector-Strengthening Plans and commitment to strong Aboriginal governance and community control. The July 2020 National Agreement on Closing the Gap, champions the belief that strong Indigenous culture is essential to achieving crucial Closing the Gap health, well-being and life targets.



‘20. The parties recognise that strong Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are fundamental to improved life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.’

Australian Governments & Coalition of Peaks
National Agreement On Closing The Gap, 2020,

‘You don’t get strong art without strong culture. We would like the government and the funding bodies to understand that stronger and ongoing support, for all this together, is needed now and into the future.’

ANKA Kimberley Artists Statement, 2017 (2012).

What we need

ANKA calls on governments to recognise the remote Aboriginal art and culture sectors’ foundation in community control, developed over half a century. And to collaborate with us on designing a Sector **Strengthening Plan** for the remote Aboriginal art and culture sector.

A **National Indigenous Cultural Policy**, co-designed in real partnership with Aboriginal community controlled organisations, is also vitally needed to complement Revive – the National Cultural Policy. These initiatives must be informed by a realistic **Map of the Remote Indigenous Art and Culture Sector ecology**. Without such urgent timely action, not only the sustainability of the Remote Indigenous Art and Culture Sector, but also the foundations of Indigenous health in strong culture (the ‘cultural determinants of health’), and preservation of Australia’s shared national cultural heritage, are seriously threatened.

In summary, ANKA calls for:

1. **A Sector Strengthening Plan** for the Remote Indigenous Art and Culture Sector (Focusing on Indigenous community-controlled art and culture centres and peak bodies).
2. **A National Indigenous Cultural Policy** to sit alongside Revive - the National Cultural Policy.

These crucial initiatives should be co-designed with Aboriginal community controlled cultural organisations. And be informed by:

3. **A realistic map of the Remote Indigenous Art and Culture Sector ecology**

A realistic sector map will ensure that government and Aboriginal people share an accurate understanding of the work of remote art and culture centres. And show the crossovers and contributions to varied sectors, including health, education, caring for Country, culture, language and ceremony.

I have fought many years, really hard to try and demonstrate that culture is connected to art, and the government shouldn’t fund only visual art for Indigenous art centres. There is so much more. We keep saying this over and over and over, again and again, continuously. We can only try - that’s all. Our voices, we’re saying - art can’t stand alone.’

Gabriel Nodea
Director Warmun Art Centre, 2020

The Environment

2007 UNIDIP

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was adopted in 2007 by one hundred and forty-four nations. Australia was one of only four nations initially voting against its adoption. UNIDIP outlines the rights of Indigenous people globally, including rights to self-determination, cultural rights, rights to traditional lands and territories.

2020 NATIONAL AGREEMENT ON CLOSING THE GAP

The July 2020 National Agreement on Closing the Gap is a historic and unprecedented partnership between Indigenous people, represented by the Coalition of Peaks and all Australian states and territories.

This is the first time a policy of this scale has been co-designed between the government and the community controlled sector. Crucially the policy affirms the importance of strong culture to achieving Indigenous health and well-being.

2022 PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION REPORT

The Productivity Commission report on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Visual Arts and Crafts was released in December 2022. It found that ‘strong art centres, peak organisations and artist support services, are critical for future growth but are under pressure.’

2023 REVIVE – Australia’s Cultural Policy for the Next Five Years

Australia’s first Cultural Policy since the short-lived Creative Australia (2013). Revive makes big picture commitments to First Nations Australians, including in-principle support for self determination, the intention to put First nations First (Pillar One), and restoring an autonomous First Nation’s body to the Australia Council reinvented as Creative Australia. However, Aboriginal art and culture centres are surprisingly mentioned only once in the document with a commitment to continue investing in First Nations art centres through the IVAIS support program. The limitations of this ‘business-as-usual’ approach highlight the urgent need for government to understand the tremendous contribution and unique ecology of the remote Aboriginal art and culture sector to the national cultural landscape. And most importantly to meaningfully respond to long term sustainability needs.

2023 (March) CALL FOR A DEDICATED FIRST NATIONS CULTURAL POLICY

The National Closing the Gap Alliance Group calls for a dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Cultural Policy developed in partnership with Indigenous people and communities. Arguing that it is needed to complement Revive – National Cultural Policy (Recommendation 8).

ANKA and Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre (KALACC) are amongst the organisations supporting this call.

‘ I remember watching him (Peter Marralwanga) paint at our outstation Marrkolidjban. Everyone would gather around him when he was painting. We had such a big family, and we all loved watching him paint each day, seeing that story grow. He would teach us by explaining the stories on his barks to us all. He did this so the new generation would grow up knowing these stories too.’

Janet Kalidjan Marawarr

Notes from the remote

Aboriginal art and culture sector

Ground Up

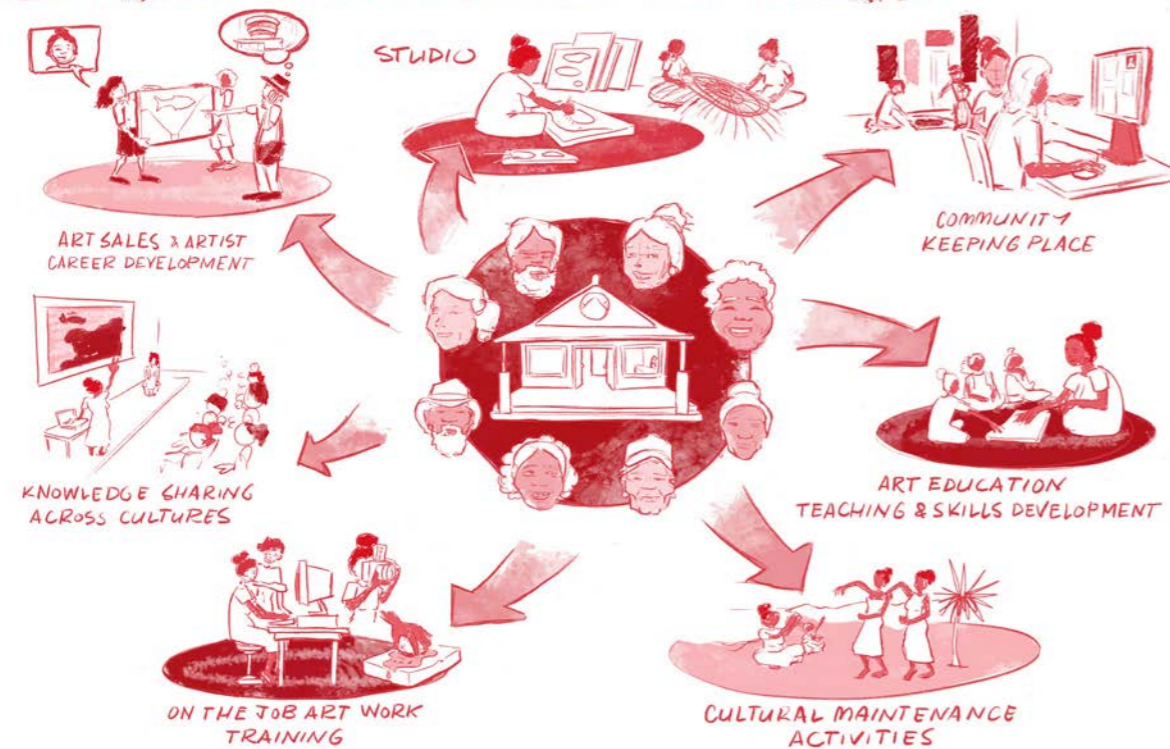
The following five graphic recordings were developed for ANKA's 2022 annual conference, Passing Down the Knowledge: being strong today, tomorrow and into the future.

These working documents illustrate different parts of the remote Indigenous community-controlled art and culture sector. They are a starting point for a much-needed, in-depth uncovering of the unique ecology of the sector. A A shared mapping of the remote Aboriginal art and culture sector is essential to inform long-term sustainability.

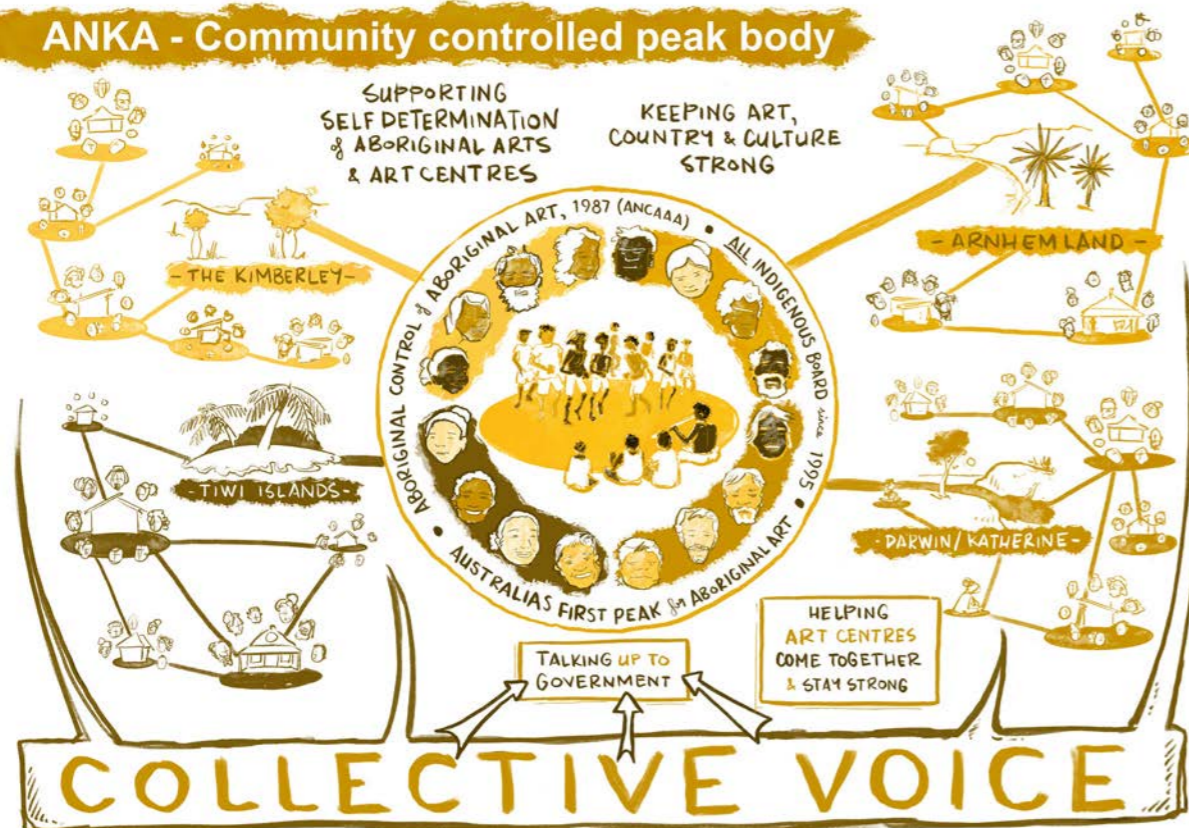
ANKA calls on the government to work with us and fellow peak body Desart on developing a realistic, in-depth mapping of the remote Indigenous art and culture sector ecology that acknowledges the following points:

- The importance of Aboriginal community-control of Aboriginal art and culture centres, and peak bodies.
- You can't have strong art without strong culture.
- The economic success of Aboriginal art and culture centres is rooted in continued cultural practice and intergenerational knowledge exchange.
- Aboriginal cultural leaders and educators are crucial in the ecosystem that feeds the production of art and should be appropriately remunerated for their roles.
- The sector has developed in parallel with the aboriginal homelands movement and the cultural renaissance of the self-determination era.
- The production of art does not occur in isolation from broader cultural practice including Aboriginal ceremony.
- Art and culture centre staff are inter-cultural mediators and should be appropriately supported and recognised.
- Art and culture centres provide crucial strengths-based employment for Aboriginal arts workers.
- Skills development and employment pathways for Aborginal arts workers need to be sensitively increased.
- It is vital for remote Aboriginal art and culture sector mapping to show the cross over with other sectors, including health, education, caring for Country, culture, language and ceremony.

Community Controlled Art & Cultural Centres



ANKA - Community controlled peak body



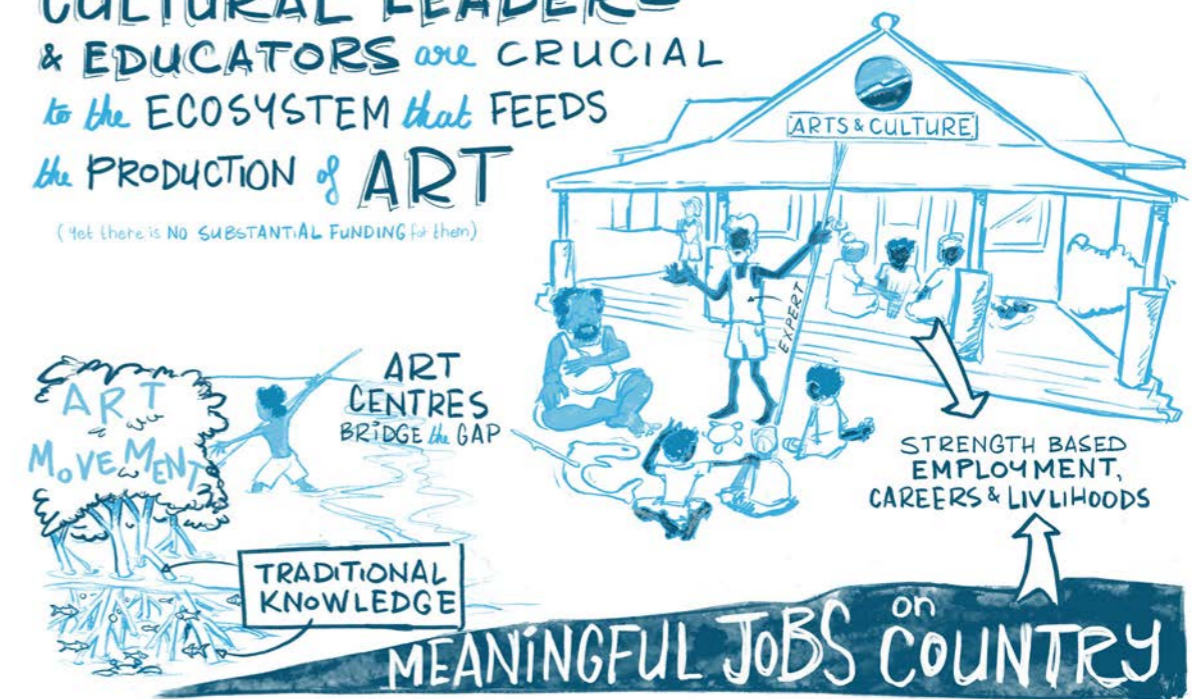
Working Documents, November 2022

You can't have strong art without strong culture



Traditional Knowledge/ Viable Futures

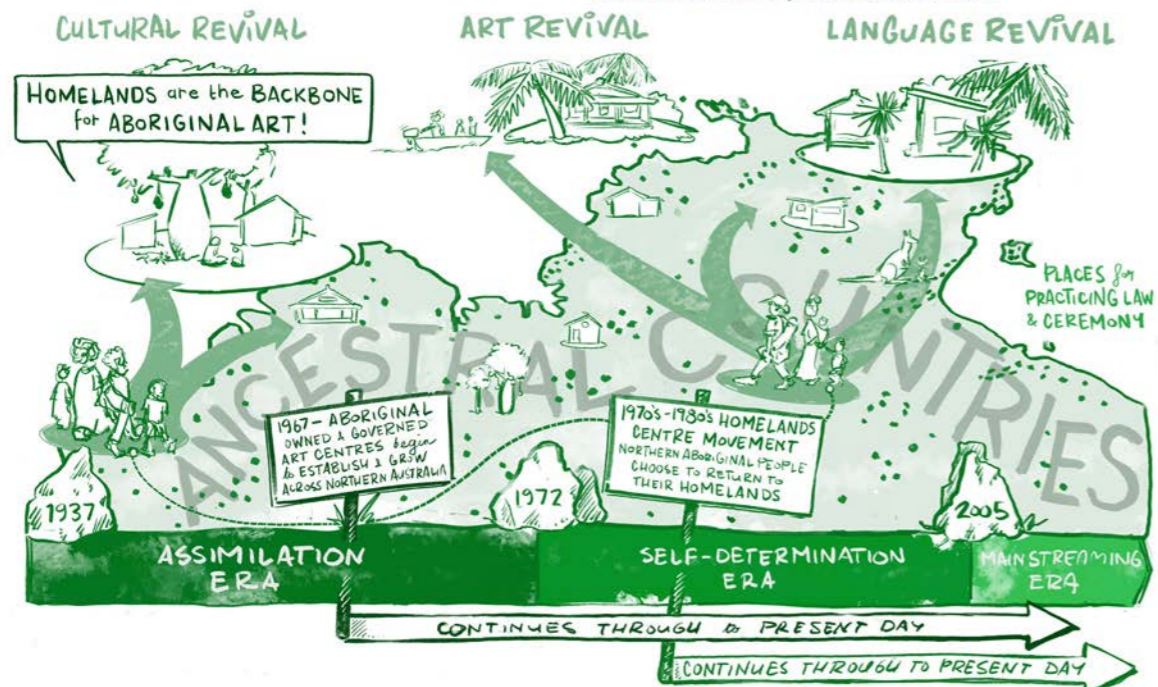
CULTURAL LEADERS & EDUCATORS are CRUCIAL to the ECOSYSTEM that FEEDS the PRODUCTION of ART
(yet there is NO SUBSTANTIAL FUNDING for them)



Working Documents, November 2022

Homelands & Art

HOMELANDS are where our YOUNG PEOPLE
LEARN CULTURE, our SONGS, CLAN DESIGNS & PATTERNS,
DANCES, KINSHIP, NAMES & STORIES



HOMELANDS: KEEPING ART, COUNTRY & CULTURE STRONG

