

TARNANTHI CONTEMPORARY ABORIGINAL & TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER ART

MEDIA RELEASE

John Mawurndjul: I am the old and the new opens at the Art Gallery of South Australia this week

**The old ways of doing things have changed into the new ways. The new generation does things differently.
But me, I have two ways. I am the old and the new – John Mawurndjul**

**Mawurndjul is not simply Australia's premier bark painter, he is one of our
greatest artists of all time – John McDonald, art critic**

The Art Gallery of South Australia's 2018 TARNANTHI opens to the public this **Thursday 25 October**. TARNANTHI is an annual event illuminates the diversity and depth of Contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art by alternately staging an expansive city-wide festival in one year and a focus exhibition the following year. TARNANTHI also includes an annual Art Fair, artist talks, performances and events.

This year TARNANTHI will present the first major survey of works by one of Australia's leading contemporary artists – master bark painter John Mawurndjul.

Developed and co-presented with the Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA), in close association with Maningrida Arts & Culture, *John Mawurndjul: I am the old and the new* includes over 160 works, spanning forty years of the artist's practice.

Presented bilingually in Kuninjku (pronounced Goo-nin-goo) and English, the exhibition illuminates Kuninjku culture and the dynamic connections between land and ancestral power in Mawurndjul's home in Western Arnhem Land. It also reveals the mastery of an artist who vividly provides a narrative thread linking the past to the present and beyond.

Internationally celebrated, John Mawurndjul defies boundaries and containment. The master bark painter creates work that is traditional yet innovatively contemporary, located specifically in his homeland but relevant to the world, and founded on beliefs that are ancestral but transcend time. Exhibition co-curator and TARNANTHI: Contemporary Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art, Artistic Director, Nici Cumpston explains 'John Mawurndjul is an artist who calls up centuries of art making to create contemporary art. Through this exhibition he has generously shared the bounty of his cultural inheritance while challenging the notions of old and new, local and global.'

Presented as part of TARNANTHI in partnership with BHP, and with the valued support of the Government of South Australia, *John Mawurndjul: I am the old and the new* is the major offering for TARNANTHI in 2018.

Laura Tyler, Asset President, BHP Olympic Dam says 'BHP is honoured to partner with TARNANTHI to celebrate the work of master bark painter John Mawurndjul. As a global resource company, we seek to build enduring relationships with the traditional owners connected to our operations around the world. As Principal Partner of TARNANTHI, we are enormously proud to bring together Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists from around Australia to share their stories and culture through works of art.'

John Mawurndjul: I am the old and the new will be officially opened on Thursday 25 October at 5.30pm for 6pm on the forecourt of the Art Gallery of South Australia with artist John Mawurndjul in attendance and performance by an all female rock group, the Ripple Effect Band, also from Maningrida.

PRINCIPAL PARTNER

PRESENTED BY



ART GALLERY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA
NORTH TERRACE, ADELAIDE SA 5000

KEY DATES:

MEDIA PREVIEW Thursday 25 October at 11am

OFFICIAL OPENING Thursday 25 October at 6pm

EXHIBITION SEASON Friday 26 October 2018 to Monday 28 January 2019

TARNANTHI ART FAIR MEDIA PREVIEW 26 October at 2pm, Tandanya National Aboriginal Cultural Institute, 253 Grenfell St

TARNANTHI ART FAIR 26-28 October, Friday 5-8pm, Saturday & Sunday 10am – 4pm

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IMAGES Available for download from www.tarnanthi.com.au/mediagallery

MICROSITE johnmawurndjul.com featuring an exhibition guide, artist interviews, learning resources, audio recordings of linguist and anthropologist Murray Garde and a glossary, accompanied by recordings of Kuninjku language by John Mawurndjul and his family

John Mawurndjul: I am the old and the new has been developed and co-presented by the Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) and the Art Gallery of South Australia, in association with Maningrida Arts & Culture. It is presented as part of TARNANTHI in partnership with BHP and with the support of the Government of South Australia.

John Mawurndjul: I am the old and the new is co-curated by Clothilde Bullen (Curator, Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Collections & Exhibitions, MCA), Natasha Bullock (Senior Curator, MCA), Nici Cumpston (Artistic Director, TARNANTHI: Contemporary Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art, Art Gallery of South Australia) and Dr Lisa Slade (Co-acting Director, Art Gallery of South Australia) with the support of Keith Munro (Curator, Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Programs, MCA) as Lead Cultural Advisor in close association with the artist and Maningrida Arts & Culture.

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