

TARNANTHI CONTEMPORARY ABORIGINAL & TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER ART



TARNANTHI 2018 comes to a close, 2019 dates announced

Adelaide, Australia: TARNANTHI 2018 came to a close on Monday after a jam-packed weekend of closing celebrations and record tour attendances. The closing celebrations culminated with a performance by Mojo Juju attracting over 1,500 people at the Art Gallery of South Australia.

In its first presentation as a focus year, TARNANTHI 2018 featured the major solo survey exhibition, *John Mawurndjul: I am the old and the new*. Developed and co-presented by the Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) and the Art Gallery of South Australia in close association with Maningrida Arts & Culture, *John Mawurndjul: I am the old and the new* welcomed over 130,000 attendances across the exhibition seasons and attracted widespread critical acclaim.

‘One of, if not the most, significant surveys of a solo Aboriginal artist’s career in an Australian art gallery, the John Mawurndjul exhibition at the Art Gallery of South Australia redefines contemporary art in the 21st century.’ – CityMag

‘Mawurndjul has produced a body of work so sophisticated, so spellbinding and so beautiful that it has earned him accolades not only in Australia (the Sydney Morning Herald’s art critic, John McDonald, recently called him “one of our greatest artists of all time”), but also across Europe.’ – Sebastian Smee, The Washington Post

Artistic Director, TARNANTHI Contemporary Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art, Nici Cumpston, says, ‘The TARNANTHI focus year allows us the opportunity to thoroughly research one specific artist or area, and in 2018 we have had the profound privilege of showcasing John Mawurndjul - a true master of our time.’

The TARNANTHI program also featured the annual TARNANTHI Art Fair, artist talks, performances and events. The Art Fair held at Tandanya National Aboriginal Cultural Institute in October showcased over 200 artists from 30 art centres from across the country. Breaking all previous records, the Art Fair generated over \$900,000 in art sales direct to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and art centres.

Director, Rhana Devenport says, 'TARNANTHI offers an innovative and unique cultural model across Australia, one we are immensely proud of in terms of its positive impact on Aboriginal culture.'

TARNANTHI returns as a City-Wide Festival in 2019 with the following dates:

TARNANTHI Launch 17 October 2019

TARNANTHI at the Gallery 18 October 2019 – 27 January 2020

TARNANTHI Art Fair 18 – 20 October 2019

TARNANTHI City-Wide Festival 18 – 27 October 2019

Laura Tyler, Asset President, BHP Olympic Dam, says 'BHP is proud of its Principal Partnership with TARNANTHI, celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art and providing opportunities for economic empowerment. Our ongoing partnership to TARNANTHI reflects BHP's Reconciliation Action Plan commitment to build trusting and mutually beneficial relationships with Traditional Owners.'

ABOUT TARNANTHI TARNANTHI presents contemporary art of the oldest living culture on an unprecedented scale, in a national event held annually by the Art Gallery of South Australia. A platform for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists from across the country, TARNANTHI presents an opportunity to share important stories.

TARNANTHI illuminates the diversity and depth of 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.

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IMAGES Available for download from

https://files.artgallery.sa.gov.au/ftp/marketing/TARNANTHI_2018_images

Image caption: Mojo Juju, Art Gallery of South Australia, 2019; photo: Morgan Sette.

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