Botanica 2

3 July – 27 July

Presented by Godinymayin Yijard Rivers Arts and Culture Centre

www.gyracc.org.au

Botanica 2 showcases work by a selection of emerging and established Northern Territory artists from Darwin, Alice Springs and the wider Katherine region. The exhibition presents the work of Indigenous and non-Indigenous women artists whose imagery focuses on plant forms, native flora and their immediate environment. Botanica, in its first iteration, was shown at Godfrey May ‘Yiild River Arts and Culture Centre in April-May 20-4. That exhibition featured 19 artists who used a range of materials, including printmaking, painting, watercolour, ceramics and sculpture to investigate the botanical world.

The exhibition took a broad interpretation of the term ‘botanical’, which usually refers to the close study of plants and flowers. In visual art botanical drawing refers to the art of depicting the form, colour and detail of plant species in a descriptive, almost scientific context. Only the work of Ann Hand, a Katherine-based artist, could be truly viewed in this light. The work of the other artists in Botanica 2 is not illustrative in any descriptive sense but rather can be seen as using the motifs of plants and flora to reflect the artists’ personal concerns and relationships to their environment. Alice Springs-based artist Marina Stroochi’s paintings are highly narrative and deploy symbols as a personal language, often filling the entire space with reiterated motifs of plant forms and other imagery. Meridja Stockley’s minimally formal and impressionistic renderings of Kurrajong pods, are almost the opposite of botanical drawings. They convey the artist’s interest in plant forms as motifs for expression rather than descriptive observation.

Pip McManus’ leaf-etched earthenware hands are individual components of a larger work, The Poisoned Well, which was first exhibited in 1996. That work comprised one hundred ceramic hands, which as a whole, acted as a memorial to one hundred twentieth century genocides. In Botanica the work is re-imagined as a forest comprising twenty hands. This edited version, serene and formally beautiful, still carries echoes of the ideas behind the original installation – the horrors, like a multitude of plant species – exist in an often dangerous and uncertain environment.

Darwin based paper-maker, printmaker and sculptor, Wimsense Jobling’s latest works with a strong environmental sensibility. Jobling makes the paper she prints on from plant fibres. Her works in Botanica are drawn from the exhibition Mesozoic – The Age of the Cynacs shown at Nomad Art in 2011. Cynacs are the world’s oldest living seed plants and are often seen as iconic symbols of the Top End landscape. The works here are one-off prints on papers made from plants ‘pigmented with bush charcoal and phosphorescent materials, alluding to the effects of fire’.

Wendy Daylight has produced a magnificent compendium, in over fifty small canvases, of the medicinal and bush tucker plants from the Elsey region. Wendy, who is based at the Jikimmajin community, produced the works as part of a cultural mapping project undertaken by Traditional Owners from the region and the Roper River Land Care Group between 2010-2012.

Botanica 2 also presents the work of two formidable Indigenous artists, Grace Huddleston (1935-2013) and Lorna Fencer Napurrula, (1920-2000). Gerrie’s paintings are representations of country around Ngukurr in the Roper region and reference plants, country and stories from her life experience and her Mara and Wandrahng heritage. Gerrie’s paintings represent an Aboriginal world view as well as a Christian one. She depicts ‘country’ alongside the productive mission gardens she tended in her youth, as both a ‘Garden of Eden’ as well as an abundant source of bush tucker and medicine.

Lorna Fencer Napurrula was a Warlipiri woman from Lajamanu, who lived on and off in Katherine, especially in her later years. Her major subject – the dreaming she illustrated over and over again – is the Yamm complex, three interrelated

elements of the ecosystem from her country Yumpurrpa in the Tanami desert – the bush potato, the pencil yam and the caterpillars that feed on them. She uses strong colour combinations and expressive brushwork to create works that vibrate with energy and power.

Many Aboriginal women also use the *pandanus spiralis* plant to make fibre for weaving baskets, mats and other objects. The roots of other plants are used to make the bush dyes that colour the objects. The exhibition showcases a selection of fibre mats and baskets from Numbulwar in south-east Arnhem Land.

*Botanica 2* presents a small snapshot of the work of some of the Northern Territory artists who represent the ‘botanical world’ in their work. The exhibition displays a diverse cross section of artists with a breadth of styles and perspectives, who explore the theme of plants, flowers and the environment, a compelling theme for many artists in this part of the world.

Cath Bowdler
Director, GYRACC – June 2014
Events

WOW "Thanku" International Women's Day
Saturday, 8 March, 12:30pm
Join us for lunch to discuss and brainstorm topics and themes for WOW Katherine 2014. Hear two inspirational speakers and be part of the conversation and planning for GYRACC's premier event for 2014.

2014 Northern Territory Sports Awards, Saturday 29 March 2014
This gala event celebrates the Territory's great athletes and teams but also those who go the extra mile behind the scenes to achieve success such as the coaches, volunteers and administrators. Katherine was chosen to host the event because of its rich sporting history producing champions such as Tour de France cycling legend, Cadel Evans and current Parramatta Eels player, Luke Kelly.

Highway of Lost Hearts
Thursday, 10 July, 7.30pm
A woman. A dog. A campervan. And 4,500km of wide open road.
Presented by Artrage NT: Arts Development and Touring.
Mary-Anne Butler's one-woman show traverses the Territory from north to the south, exploring themes of love and loss.
Written and performed by Mary Anne Butler.
"...the best piece of theatre I've seen in years."
Nicole Beyer, Director, Theatre Network Victoria
Workshops: 8-9 July: Writing Workshops with Mary-Anne Butler. Bookings HPA: development@kateregionarts.org.au or 08 8971 0928

Above: Mary-Anne Butler in Highway of Lost Hearts. Photo: Raelle Boardman.
Front cover: Winnowing Trug, Persimmon. Two plate mono print with pigment on Thai Rice paper, ochre oils and beeswax, 75 x 50cm, 2011. Image courtesy Norman Art, Darwin.

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Opening hours
Tuesday-Friday 10.00am-5.00pm
Saturday 10.00am-3.00pm
Closed public holidays
www.gyracc.org.au

Godinymayin Yijard Rivers Arts & Culture Centre
Program February – June 2014

Proudly sponsored by Northern Territory Government
**Exhibitions**

**She's a Pearler: DVAA 30 Year Retrospective**
7 February – 1 March
Opening: 7 February, 6-8pm
Celebrating 30 years of artmaking from Darwin Visual Arts Association members and workers. The exhibition features works of the Territory’s best known artists.

**Australia Wide Three**
6 March – April 5
Opening: March 7, 6-8pm
A touring exhibition from the Ozquilt Network Inc featuring a range of beautiful small-scale art quilts. The exhibition will be supplemented by textiles from the Katherine Art Collection and the work of some of Katherine’s premier quilters.

**Botanica**
11 April – 10 May
Opening: 11 April, 6-8pm
Botanica showcases work by a selection of emerging and established artists from Darwin, Alice Springs and the Katherine region. The exhibition presents the work of artists whose imagery focuses on plant forms, native flora and the minutiae of their immediate environment. Curated by Cath Bowdle.

**Workshop:** May 4th: Botanical Drawing and Painting workshop with Ann Hand. Bookings KRA: development@kathregionarts.org.au or 08 8971 0928.

**Mangarrayi Country**
16 May – 14 June
Opening: 16 May, 6-8pm
This exhibition is the culmination of cultural mapping work undertaken by Mangarrayi Traditional Owners from the Roper River Catchment. The Elders were keen to develop a cultural map of Elsey Station for passing onto the next generation and to record some of their stories. A joint project through the Roper River Landcare Group and the assistance of Simon Norman it captures the dreamtime stories and collective cultural heritage of Elsey Station.

K space will have its own program running concurrently from February – November 2014.

**Performance**

**Andy Irvine in concert**
8 February, 7.30pm in the Gallery
World famous Irish musician, singer and songwriter presents traditional music for the modern world.
Andy Irvine has been hailed as “a tradition in himself”. Andy has been a world music pioneer and an icon for traditional music and musicians. He is recognised as one of the great Irish singers...who gets to the very soul of Ireland.

**Djuki Mala**
Saturday, 1 March, 7.30pm
Artback NT: Arts Development and Touring presents a show full of excitement for the whole family. Djuki Mala (Chooky Dancers) are touring nationally throughout 2014 with their self titled and long awaited show Djuki Mala.
Hailing from Galwin/Kyu Community (Echo Island) in North East Arnhem Land, dance innovators Djuki Mala have been exploring and re-establishing notions of contemporary Aboriginal performance. Produced and directed by Joshua Bond. “Energetic, Naurious, groundbreaking” Beat Magazine

**Workshop:** 1 March: Djuki Mala-Chooky Dancers workshop at St Josephs College 2:30-3:30. Bookings KRA: development@kathregionarts.org.au or 08 8971 0928.

**Dust of Uruzgan**
Wednesday, 21 May, 7.30pm
Artback NT: Arts Development and Touring presents a musical, multi-media performance by acclaimed musician and songwriter Fred Smith. In 2011 Smith returned from 16 months in Uruzgan Province, southern Afghanistan with a collection of songs he released as the album Dust of Uruzgan.
In 2014 the stage show Dust of Uruzgan tours Australia wide. The show combines songs, humour and commentary with a stunning set of projected photographs by military and civilian photographers.