



Media release

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## Mid-west artists shine on city stage

Works from a new group of exciting mid-west Indigenous artists sold quickly last night at the launch of the **Bundi Gurdurdu** (Good Heart) mid-west Aboriginal Art Exhibition.

The exhibition, a partnership project of the Naaguja Warangkarri Aboriginal Corporation and Oakajee Port and Rail (OPR), featured the works of more than 40 Indigenous artists.

OPR's Chief Executive officer Christopher Eves said the exhibition was a wonderful example of what OPR hoped to achieve by working together with the local Indigenous communities in the mid-west region.

"We hope this exhibition will be the first of many and will lead to the establishment of a sustainable arts enterprise for the mid-west region," Mr Eves said.

"Our people live and work in the mid-west region and OPR is determined to provide opportunities to help build strong, sustainable communities.

"We hope to be able to build on our work with the local Aboriginal community in the future, should we be awarded the tender to build the new port at Oakajee."

Deputy Premier Eric Ripper said the quality and variety of Australian Indigenous art reflected the richness and diversity of Indigenous cultures and the different landscapes in which they lived.

"I think we are in a position where we can say that Western Australia is now rivalling the Northern Territory as the most productive and innovative area for Aboriginal art in Australia," Mr Ripper said.

"None of this happens without partnerships. Partnerships between Indigenous people and sponsoring organisations, partnerships between the public sector and the private sector."

Launching the exhibition, Acting Director of the WA Art Gallery Gary Dufour paid tribute to the many new artistic talents who had been unearthed as a result of the exhibition.

"Tonight we have a rare opportunity to grow our understanding of the mid-west and begin to acknowledge and honour a new generation of Indigenous artists from an ancient but for many an unfamiliar land," Mr Dufour said.

“The time has come to celebrate the mid-west region’s creativity and imagination; the imagination of Indigenous artists as they venture out to share their work on the big stage.

“The works are stunning and the exhibition brings together artists from across the region.”

Commission fees from the sale of the artworks were waived so all of the money raised has gone directly to the artists.

Almost 200 people attended the exhibition launch last night and viewed the works of more than 40 Indigenous artists from mid-west communities including Geraldton, Yalgoo, Cue, Mt Magnet, Meekatharra, Morawa, Mullewa and Yulga Jinna near Meekatharra.

Among the 80 plus pieces on display are works by well established mid-west artists Olive Boddington, Loretta Egan, who is known for her fine, neat dot work and colourful, rhythmic designs and Charmaine Green, who won the NAIDOC poster competition in 2006.

The exhibition at the QV1 building, 250 St George Terrace, runs until June 13 and the sales desk will be staffed between 10am-4pm.

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