

MEDIA RELEASE

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To celebrate NAIDOC Week and the outstanding contributions of First Nations Australians to the arts, Tuggeranong Arts Centre presents a suite of exhibitions from 6-29 July, 2017.

Internationally acclaimed, award winning Canberra-based glass artist Jennifer Kemarre Martiniello continues a long association with the Tuggeranong Arts Centre with her solo show of new work *Ecology, Tradition, Art*.

Jennifer Kemarre Martiniello is a contemporary Aboriginal (Arrente) artist who grew up in Adelaide and holds strong connections to her Grandmother's country in Central Australia. Jenni graduated from the ANU School of Art in 1985 with a major in sculpture and began working with glass 10 years ago after a successful career as a painter and writer.

Her glasswork is well known to Canberra audiences. Her recent solo shows include *Open Work* in 2012 featuring glass made with the Venetian technique of canework, *GlassWeave* in 2013 featuring glass objects based on the forms of fish traps and baskets woven by Indigenous people and *Reinventing the Weave* in 2015.

In 2013 Martiniello won the prestigious 30th Telstra Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander Art Award with her work *Golden Brown Reeds Fish Trap*. Later that year she also won a prestigious \$90,000 fellowship at the National Indigenous Art Awards. Jenni's work is currently represented in many significant private and public collections including the National Gallery of Australia.

For the Tuggeranong exhibition Jenni will exhibit over a dozen glass pieces including new large-scale works. *Ecology, Tradition, Art* showcases the diversity of her practice and includes blown glass fish traps, eel traps and dilly bags along with some previously exhibited Message Sticks.

Martiniello says her inspiration remains the same, but ongoing research gives her work richness and fresh appeal. "Some of the oldest living traditions in the world still inspire my work but the way I present colour, light and form of the natural fibres used in these traditional art forms is continually developing," Jenni said.

Jenni says she approaches glass making as a vehicle for continuing her Indigenous cultural expression. "Message sticks were traditionally given as an invitation to trade or as a mark of safe passage and these traditional methods of communication inform this part of my work," she said.

Martiniello also prides herself on her role as mentor to emerging Indigenous artists. Exhibiting alongside Jenni in Tuggeranong are 2 emerging artists with diverse styles.

Karen Lee is an emerging artist whose practice explores the native flora and fauna around her home in the lower Blue Mountains/Penrith region in NSW. Her vibrant paintings in *Veils: An Exploration of Landscape and Memory* are overlaid with Aboriginal symbolism and patterns.

Kayannie Denigan is a young Anangu artist with family cultural ties to Bagarmuguwarra and Kuku Yalanji Bama. Her work in *My Country: Ngathu Bubu* combines the iconic dots of her Luritja heritage with the colours and stories of her upbringing in Cape York.

Martiniello says she looks forward to meeting Karen Lee and being introduced to her work. "Kayannie Denigan is a talented young artist who has worked hard to develop her own style. She eagerly embraces an ecological perspective in her work which is something I admire and I think she will go a long way," Jenni said.

The Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs Ms Rachel Stephen Smith will officially open the exhibitions at 6.30pm on Thursday 6 July.

This will be followed by a short speech by Aimee Frodsham, Program Manager, Art Collection & Exhibitions, Parliament House. Ngunnawal Elder Aunty Agnes Shea will perform a Welcome to Country.