

STYLEUP

FASHION, BEAUTY
& LIFESTYLE

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Billie-Jean Hamlet
on the KAFTA
runway. Picture:
Isabelle Grand'Eury

After the tide, Fitzroy rises

NATASHA CLARK

Orange afternoon light dapples the concrete of the old bridge as young Aboriginal women turn it into a runway, draped in garments created by local designers.

It's a striking scene — almost unimaginable on the same bridge that, nearly three years ago, lay beneath a once-in-a-century flood which devastated the Fitzroy Valley and cut off the town of Fitzroy Crossing in WA's Kimberley region.

The 2022-23 floods damaged about 240 properties and forced more than 1500 people to evacuate in what became WA's worst recorded flood.

Since then, much of the physical damage has been repaired, and the Fitzroy Bridge has been reconstructed.

The community is now investing in something longer-term: helping young women recover from the trauma the flood left behind.

Fitzroy Crossing's Camilla Sawford says she grew up with floods, but this time she knew something was different.

"When people ask if it was scary for the community, I say yes — it was," she says.

Ms Sawford remembers the stress rippling through families as the water rose and the scale of the damage became clear.

Through Marra Worra Worra Aboriginal Corporation's After the Flood fashion workshops, young women and girls affected by the disaster have been given a space to be supported by women who understand their experiences.

The project was made possible through funding from the Australian and WA governments under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements, with additional support from Kimberley Aboriginal Fashion Textiles and Art.

Over two days in late November the women worked with the KAFTA program, which develops First Nations designers, stylists and creatives across northern WA.

Day one focused on modelling, fashion and art tutorials at MWWAC's Night Space, while day two brought those new skills on to the runway.

Working alongside the KAFTA team were three mentors who grew up in Fitzroy

Crossing: founder of Jalayimiya swimwear Brodie George, founder of Litiyalla earrings Ms Sawford, and international model Billie-Jean Hamlet — each returning home to guide the girls through the workshops.

Before the program began, KAFTA artistic director Kartika Christophers sat on the floor of MWWAC's Night Space, meeting the girls at eye level.

She told them warmly but firmly: "We aren't doing shame."

She was naming something many young women in the Fitzroy Valley talk about — the

feeling that expressing their femininity, or being visibly confident can draw unwanted attention or criticism.

It's also something Ms Sawford says "holds us back".

"We can't fully be seen or even experience things if we sit back and we go, 'No, we're too shame'," she says

Ms Christophers praises the women for challenging shame by entering the Night Space to participate in the program.

"It takes a lot of courage for our girls to walk through that doorway and be here," she says.

She says the skills the girls learnt are not isolated to the runway — they are applicable to everyday life.

"There aren't a lot of programs out there that are promoting empowerment, beauty, hygiene, poise and confidence for our young women," Ms Christophers says.

"These are skills the girls don't even realise they're building, but they're capacity-building.

"It means that when they're ready for job interviews, they have more confidence in how they hold themselves."

A woman who embodies this is Kahlia Rogers — a Night Space youth officer and 2024 National Indigenous Fashion Awards young achiever, who brought unmistakable elegance gliding down the runway when opening the show.

Ms Rogers walked in an outfit painted by children she mentors at the Night Space, their illustrations vivid against the backdrop of the bridge.

Moments later, those same girls followed her down the runway, expressing how strength moves between generations in the Fitzroy Valley.

Ms Rogers says the project is not only about self-empowerment but also an opportunity for the young women "to build each other up".

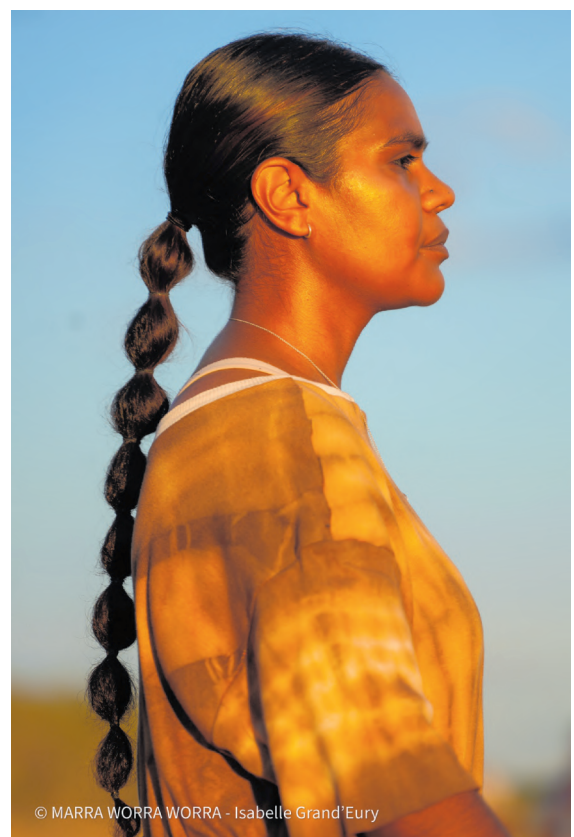
"It's a great way for the women to positively feed off each other's energy, and boost creativity," she says.

Among them is 10-year-old Jeneaqua, one of the youngest participants, who says she simply loves being with her friends and doing fashion by the river.

"I love fashion and I love being here with friends and family," she says.

"I like this modelling thing for girls.

"You can do hair and make-up and stuff, you get to go to old bridge and do fashion."





Pictures: Isabelle Grand'Eury



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© MARRA WORRA WORRA - Isabelle Grand'Eury

Artist's work on show at Triennial

PHOEBE BLOGG

Yolnu artist Naminapu Maymuru-White is showcasing her work at the 5th National Indigenous Art Triennial: After The Rain.

The exhibition, which opened at the National Gallery of Australia on December 6, sees artists including Vincent Namatjira, Alair Pambegan, Aretha Brown, Blaklash, Dylan Mooney, Hermannsburg Potters, IltjaNtjarra (Many Hands) Art Centre, and Jimmy John Thaiday presenting 10 large-scale, immersive multi-disciplinary installations celebrating intergenerational legacies and cultural warriors of the past, present and future.

Artistic director, artist and Girramay/Yidinji/Kuku-Yalanji man Tony Albert worked with the artists, inviting them to respond to the exhibition title, which for him represented rebirth and new beginnings.

Maymuru-White said she found the process “really interesting and helpful”.

“I really appreciated working alongside Tony and the team from the NGA, I enjoyed

spending time with Tony in Yirrkala sharing my work and art centre to give him a deeper understanding of my work and community,” she told Style Up.

“When we share the patterns and designs passed down from our ancestors it shows us the way to live our life, sharing the journey and our connection to the Milniyawuy, the Milky Way.

“My work is about the cycle of life and our journey here on earth and in the stars.”

Maymuru-White said her homeland heavily influenced all her work.

“My homeland is Djarrakpi at the base of Cape Shield in the northern part of Blue Mud Bay. . . My paintings are from there, they share the stories of the land, sea and the river on earth and in the sky,” she said.

“In a Yolnu world we know that everything is connected — people, land, sea, animals and the sky.

“When I look up at the night sky, I can see my ancestors but I can also feel connected to friends and family that are a long way away.”

On the theme of After The Rain, Maymuru-White said:

“When I think of rebirth it is about a cycle of life; our Gurrutu kinship system connects us all to each other and to all things, and our ceremonies and songs connect us with the spirits of our ancestors and our country.”

“When I leave this place on Earth, I will become part of the Milniyawuy — Milky Way and my children and their children can see me up there as one of the stars.

“My art is real, it is the truth for us and will never stop or change, our law and knowledge is there and has been passed down through my family and clan for generations.

“Every line carries a memory of the land, our ancestors and the laws that guide us.”

Maymuru-White said she was thrilled her work would be touring nationally for two years after the exhibition at the National Gallery ends in April.

The 5th National Indigenous Art Triennial: After The Rain is made possible by the support of the National Gallery's First Nations Arts Partner, Wesfarmers Arts, and key philanthropic supporters. Entry is free.



Naminapu Maymuru-White Picture: Leicolhn Mckellar

For those who need our care

Inspired by Executive Chairman Gina Rinehart AO, we're for caring for others when they need it most.

HANCOCK
IRON ORE
FOR AUSTRALIA


Solaris Cancer
Care



No room for shades of grey

JARRED CROSS

Aretha Brown's contribution to the National Gallery of Australia's 5th Indigenous Art Triennial: *After The Rain* is one of her most significant works to date.

"I'm doing this huge 50m mural detailing the time line of this country and the 'birth of this nation', whatever that means," she told National Indigenous Times.

"From the Dreamtime to Cook's arrival, first contact, 1930s to revolutionary '60s, Sydney Olympics then to the present day, the referendum, Treaty, and also Blak future.

"It's definitely culturally my biggest work, in terms of what it means to me."

The Gumbaynggir artist moved to Sydney (on Gadigal Country) from her base in Naarm/Melbourne this year in large part for her exhibition, to throw herself into the "lion's den" of first contact.

"I'm depicting arguably the darkest moment in our country's history," she said.

"I kind of felt a little bit like an imposter trying to draw the Endeavour or the First Fleet sitting in my studio in Brunswick. I went, 'This doesn't feel real. I'm just looking at other photos, and I'm trying to feel something that doesn't exist right now'.

"This sounds crazy . . . but I actually went on the Captain Cook. There's a fake Endeavour ship that sits in Darling Harbour. I went on it.

"I had to really feel . . . Imagine 200 years ago, I was sitting here and I saw a ship mast come over the horizon. How would that feel?"

Brown said she needed to go to the heart of that history.

"I had to go to these kinds of places and really feel like I was in the lion's den to understand and make a work that felt real," she said. "Because it didn't feel authentic otherwise."

More than 70 public street art pieces into her career, including several overseas, and with her Kiss My Art Collective, her body of work is an active effort to "take up space" and decolonise cities and suburbs using her own brand of symbols, or "twist" on those passed down from the women in her family.

Her often sole use of black and white paint has a humble origin.

"I was just a broke student,



Gumbaynggir artist Aretha Brown. Picture: Jarred Cross

and I literally could afford one litre of black paint, one litre of white paint, and that was it," she said.

"I kind of like my style, and I know where that came from. I see the world in black and white as an Aboriginal person.

"And so, my works are black and white. There are no grey areas. When I was in art school, people were expecting me to do dot. My mob, we're Gumbaynggir. We're not dot artists or desert people. Even that expectation of dot art in the very beginning, I went, 'No way. I'm doing whatever I want'. I drew up my own style with my own symbols, my own way."

Brown's mother and grandmother are and were deadly painters, she said.

"My campaign and my motto is to teach Black history," she said. "It's pretty simple. It's about people understanding that this country has a Black history, a Black present and a Black future as well. For me, it's always come down to (saying)

"I see the world in black and white as an Aboriginal person. And so, my works are black and white. There are no grey areas."

Aretha Brown

Aboriginal culture is so unique. It's so special. It's so beautiful.

"This country's got a bit of catching up to do in terms of, you know, how it thinks about Aboriginal art . . . there are lots of stereotypes still out there, lots of misconceptions.

"It's all about subverting the stereotype of what Aboriginal art is.

"This is all history . . . these are symbols the Black women in my family have taught me

and passed down to me. And if you cut off Aboriginal people's ability to make art, you've just severed songlines, you've severed thousands of years of art and education and history. It's like burning a textbook."

Brown had her first painting selected for a major exhibition at the National Gallery of Victoria in 2018, while still in her teens. It was a swift entry into the national art sphere for the now 25-year-old, first doing art classes in Year 12 at school, and one of just two Black students, she said, in her classes at university.

In *After The Rain*, Brown is sharing a room with Vincent Namatjira, led by artistic director and her "deadly mentor" Tony Albert.

"I can retire after this... he's (Namatjira) truly my hero. He's the most exciting iconic painter I think we've got in this country. To share a space with someone that I studied is like, it's a bit of like, pinch me moment," she said.

"After The Rain is about rebirth and new beginnings. It

symbolises planting new seeds and our reasons for doing so.

"After The Rain carries cultural, economic and political weight, and gives artists a rich and diverse set of themes to explore. When you visit, I want you to be transported, fully immersed into the artists' worlds."

Alongside Brown, featured artists include Alair Pambegan, Blaklash (Troy Casey and Amanda Hayman), Dylan Mooney, Jimmy John Thaiday, Alair Pambegan, Naminapu Maymuru-White, Thea Anamara Perkins, Yarrenyty Arltre Artists and Grace Kemarre Robinya, and Warraba Weatherall, alongside Albert Namatjira, Vincent Namatjira, Hermannsburg Pottery, and Iltja Ntjarra Art Centre as House of Namatjira.

The National Gallery of Australia's 5th Indigenous Triennial: *After The Rain* opened on December 6 and will remain at the Gallery, on Ngannawal and Ngambri Country in Canberra, until April 26 before embarking on a two-year national tour.

Songs that capture spirit of Country put six in line for award

JOSEPH GUENZLER

Six Indigenous artists are in the running for this year's Environmental Music Prize, set to be announced on Wednesday, December 17.

King Stingray (Yolngu), Charlie Needs Braces (Garigal), DOBBY (Filipino/Muruwari), Mitch Tambo (Gamilaroi), Wildheart (Yugumbah), and Sunny Luwe (Wayilwan) are among the 30

finalists reflecting diverse communities and identities contributing to Australia's climate conversation.

Their songs explore themes such as rising tides, fossil fuel dependence, biodiversity loss and community resilience — drawing on personal, cultural and environmental experiences.

The finalists were selected by eco-focused music ambassadors and community impact leaders,

with an emphasis on work that can shift public thinking through storytelling.

Prize founder Edwina Floch outlined the purpose of the award.

"Music reminds us of what's at stake, but it also gives us hope," she said.

"These songs capture the beauty of nature, the spirit of Country and the resilience of communities rising to protect it. Together, they form a

powerful soundtrack for now."

Public voting closed on 14 December. Voters could select three songs and share them to help strengthen the reach of the messages carried in the finalists' work.

The Environmental Music Prize, now in its third year, offers \$20,000 to the winner; aiming to increase recognition for artists using music to drive environmental awareness.

Genres represented across the finalists include folk, hip-hop, pop, indie rock and electronic.

Previous winners King Gizzard & The Lizard Wizard and Xavier Rudd donated their prize funds to community conservation projects, reinforcing the prize's emphasis on linking creative expression with environmental outcomes.

Ms Floch said this year's finalists continue that approach.

Giant's life dedicated to healing

JARRED CROSS

This report contains the name of someone who has passed away.

The late Maitland Parker was a giant in his community and widely-respected Banjima Elder who dedicated his life to healing his home, 'poison Country' in the Pilbara.

Yurlu | Country, a moving and brave telling of his final year, intimate family moments and continued fight to clean up Country was recognised with the Walkley Documentary Award in late November.

Mr Parker passed from illness linked to the destruction of Banjima Country — mid-20th century mining of asbestos and three million tonnes of tailings left after the mining ceased.

Boyhood exposure resulted in Uncle Maitland ultimately growing ill with mesothelioma.

Aboriginal people in Western Australia have the highest incidence of mesothelioma in

the world, the film explains, and his home Country is considered the largest contaminated site in the Southern Hemisphere.

Six decades have passed since the health of that Country, and community, changed forever.

"We have to look at avenues to be able to bring that message across, because this happened in my Elders' generation, and then as a young person as Banjima, you sit there and you think, 'Well, our Elders didn't have a say, but now we have some kind of say'," Mr Parker's niece Johnnell told National Indigenous Times during early preview screenings in August.

"Uncle Maitland highlighted that Country is sick and it is poisoned, and it's been poisoned for the last 60 years."

Ms Parker is also a director on the board of Banjima Native Title Aboriginal Corporation.

Already a five-time Walkley winner before the latest honour, Yaara Bou Melhem



Yurlu | Country, a legacy film of Maitland Parker, received the Walkley Documentary award. Pic: (Illuminate Films)

directed Yurlu | Country, with support of crew, including Indigenous members of the team, Tom Banningan, and distributed by Illuminate Films.

The late Mr Parker is credited as co-writer and executive producer.

The documentary came out ahead at the Walkleys in front of high-quality finalists The Palestine Laboratory from Al Jazeera English and Black Leaf Films, and the ABC with Wild Pacific Media's The Kimberley.

Ms Bou Melhem told National Indigenous Times:

"Maitland's story was so powerful. Not only was he trying to clean up and heal the largest contaminated site in the southern hemisphere, but it mirrored his own struggle with mesothelioma, something that he developed as a result of exposure to his Country," she said. "We wanted to work with him, and he wanted to work with us to really honour his story, honour the fight, and try to get this cleaned up for the next generation."

Ms Bou Melhem said Mr Parker and his family "bravely

brought us into their lives so that together, we could bring this largely 'out of sight, out of mind' issue into full view".

"Receiving a Walkley, the highest honour in Australian journalism, is huge for propelling Banjima people's campaign to clean up Wittenoom on the national stage," she said.

Johnnell Parker, Mr Parker's wife Marjorie Hughes, and his daughters Coreen and Renira described their uncle, husband and father as a gentle and devoted family man.

environment plan

seeking relevant persons' input



Chevron has been operating in Australia for more than 70 years – creating enduring benefits and delivering reliable, affordable energy. We welcome feedback to enhance our environmental management measures as we progress offshore activities to support the ongoing supply of natural gas to Western Australia and the Asia Pacific region.

our activities

Chevron Australia is planning to drill and complete six subsea production wells in the Geryon and Eurytion gas fields in Commonwealth waters, approximately 180 kilometres off the northwest coast of WA in water depths of approximately 1,200 metres. The drilling activities are indicatively scheduled to commence in early 2027 and are expected to take approximately 12 to 18 months to complete.

The feedback we receive during consultation will inform and enhance the Gorgon Stage 3 Drilling Environment Plan, which must be accepted by the National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority (NOPSEMA) before activities may commence.

environment that may be affected (EMBA)

As part of our environmental assessment and consultation process, we create maps to provide geographical context for relevant persons to determine if their functions, interests or activities may be affected by an offshore petroleum activity during planned activities (e.g. routine or contingency operations) or from an unplanned event (e.g. emergency scenarios).

The map shows the operational area (OA) which is a 5 km radius buffer around the indicative location of the wells, and the EMBA, which is based on worst-case unplanned hydrocarbon release (oil spill) scenarios resulting from either a vessel collision or loss of well control event.

The EMBA has been defined through combining multiple oil spill model simulations for the unplanned release scenarios under different weather and ocean conditions. This means that in the highly unlikely event an unplanned release does occur, a geographical area much smaller than the EMBA would be affected.



The majority of the impacts and risks directly arising from planned activities would occur within, or within proximity of, the OA.

Chevron Australia has systematic control measures to prevent and mitigate emergencies and to reduce the impact of planned activities on the environment, including ecological, social and cultural sensitivities.

we want to hear from you

We are now seeking feedback and input if you consider your functions, interests, or activities may be affected. This may include Traditional Owners and Custodians with a spiritual and cultural connection to land and sea Country, local community members, and those involved in commercial or recreational fishing and tourism.

Please contact us by **20 January 2026** to be included in consultations. Visit australia.chevron.com/feedback, call tollfree on **1800 225 195** or scan the **QR code** for more information.

