

ONE TOO MANY

12 MARCH — 15 APRIL 2022
THE CROSS ART PROJECTS



IN PROUD COLLABORATION WITH
ITLJA NTJARRA MANY HANDS ART CENTRE

Featuring Itlja Ntjarra
Many Hands Artists
BENITA CLEMENTS
SELMA COULTHARD
DELLINA INKAMALA
DELRAY INKAMALA
DIANNE INKAMALA
VANESSA INKAMALA
REINHOLD INKAMALA
MERVYN RUBUNTJA
BETTY WHEELER NAMATJIRA
MARCUS WHEELER

With special guest
CHIPS MACKINOLTY

Curated by Jo Holder, The Cross Art Projects
+ Itlja Ntjarra Many Hands Art Centre

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© The Cross Art Projects, 2022
Cover Artwork: Vanessa Inkamala, Don't Drink Drive,
watercolour (finished with cold wax) on steel or sheet
aluminium (recycled road sign), 45cm x 45 cm (481-21)

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Jo Holder



Betty Wheeler
Namatjira, Tjoritja,
watercolour (finished
with cold wax) on steel
or sheet aluminium
(recycled road sign),
45 x 45cm (498-21)
(Detail).

‘The landscape is telling us that the situation was good and healthy before, but now there are diseases and suffering.’ — Vanessa Inkamala¹

One Too Many is one in a series of de-colonising exhibitions and projects presented by the powerhouse Itlja Ntjarra / Many Hands Art Centre located in Mparntwe (Alice Springs). Albert Namatjira’s watercolour heritage and Central Australia’s blindingly glorious landscapes are celebrated and carefully overlaid with images of modernity or juxtaposed with subtle whispering or agit-prop manifestos. Decades on, these artists are the third and now fourth generation of Namatjira’s family and kin.

The project’s chorus is, ‘Tjina Nurna-ka, Pmarra Nurn-kanha, Itla Itla Nurn-kanha / Our family, our country, our legacy, does not change.’ – Itlja Ntjarra Artists.

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<sup>1</sup> Vanessa Inkamala, ‘Talking up strong for country’ in Living Tradition, Itla Ntjarra Art Centre, 1019, p.19.

Itlja Ntjarra artists are back in Sydney with two powerful exhibitions. Pmarra nurna-kanha ntarntarai—Care for Our Country (Rivus, the 23rd Biennale of Sydney, 2022), is presented at The Cutaway in Barangaroo, and the sister installation, One Too Many, here at The Cross Art Projects. Both installations are comprised of paintings on re-purposed road signs or industrial refuge. They are beautiful and witty, but they are also heart breaking. José Roca, Artistic Director of the Sydney Biennale, is wise and alert to the fact that, ‘sustainability should be an action, not a theme’.

One Too Many opens a window onto the rivers of grog that blight lives and litter landscapes. If you’ve had one too many, you have drunk too much alcohol. As you enter The Cross Art Projects you are greeted by a tourist map, a road and an installation of flattened and painted beer cans: wreckage collected on the

road to old Hermannsburg, a former Lutheran mission and museum, and new mission and surrounding outstations. Your scenic journey runs between National Parks: Tjoritja West MacDonnell Ranges and Finke Gorge.

You examine the series of red, blue and yellow crushed and re-burnished aluminium cans and on each is a vignette—a miniature painting that recalls country and western songs about roads that ‘take me home’. The road crosses land that is home to the Western Aranda people. The trip is marked by modified and re-purposed road signs warning us to ‘slow’, and the occasional minutely detailed drinkers’ camp. Vanessa Inkamala and Selma Coulthard, the exhibition’s artist/curatorial elders and other participants, have painted ‘distance to destination’ markers counting-down the journey.

At journey’s end is an old stone church where Selma Coulthard warns, ‘You

will end up unless you stop drinking.’ Ntaria (Hermannsburg) is not far from Mparntwe (Alice Springs) and has a history of grog-running. But you could be singing your heart out as you travel on any Australian country road, blithely passing signs of an epidemic of alcohol abuse. In Mparntwe drinks are ordered by colours that identify cheap full-strength or heavy beer brands. In a pub, cans are often thrown at drinkers.

Logos from bottle shop chains feature in the exhibition, such as Selma Coulthard’s wry road sign with a Thirsty Camel (a marketing franchise). Artist Chips Mackinolty reworks Woolworths’ faux-urbane Dan Murphys bottle-shop brand: ‘guaranteeing\* higher death price’. These logos expose an ugly reality: most Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory are dry by choice, so rivers of grog flow out of bottle shops and down to riverbeds and grog-runners on backroads. The money flows up stream.

For the 2012 exhibition, The Endurance of Bush Medicine and accompanying publication The Art of Healing,<sup>2</sup> artist and Iltpja Ntjarra chair, Mervyn Rubuntja wrote about his experience with alcohol: ‘One time, in 1999, I had problems in my liver. I admit that I had consumed too much alcohol at the time. The doctor told me that I had three or four days to live. My in-laws prepared the drink from young gum tree leaves; it was kept in a large drum. Every day for four days I drank a warm-temperature bottle full of it. I then healed, and the doctor couldn’t believe it! I haven’t drunk alcohol for years and I don’t drink any more. I am convinced that bush medicines are better than white man’s medicines.’<sup>3</sup>

Academic Marcia Langton has for

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² The Art of Healing: Australian Indigenous Bush Medicine, edited by Jacqueline Healy, Melbourne University Medical Museum, 2012.

³ Mervyn Rubuntja, The Art of Healing: Australian Indigenous Bush Medicine, edited by Jacqueline Healy, Melbourne University Medical Museum, 2012, p.46.

many years identified and written on the colonial guarantee of ‘rum, seduction and death’. Australian governments are willing captives of the grog lobby and their ‘fun’ campaigns. The industry fights any attempt to constrain supply or restrict their operations.⁴ Aboriginal communities across the Territory defend their culture and have repeatedly resisted attempts by the alcohol industry to make inroads into their lives. Usually it is the Women’s Night Patrols that defend and try to shield families from domestic violence.

Chips Mackinolty has a long history working for Aboriginal run health organisations. In Darwin he opened the exhibition Groggy (NCCA, 2013) by reminding viewers, ‘Everyone assumes that grog is an exclusively Aboriginal

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<sup>4</sup> The alcohol industry is currently lobbying the Federal Government to remove the payment of excise tax. This will drop the unit price and enable ‘cheaper’ grog. See: FARE objection to the Treasurer from 80 health organisations.

problem. That is simply not true. Around 50% of Aboriginal people don't drink at all.' Health coalitions continue to battle alcohol corporations to ensure their engagement contributes to the empowerment, recognition and self-determination of First Nations peoples. Mackinolt's installation in One Too Many is a line-up of miniature counter-propaganda posters. They assisted a five-year battle against a proposal to locate the Territory's biggest bottle shop beside three dry Darwin communities located just down the road from the airport.

Alcohol companies rely on exploiting risky drinking, with 5% of the Australian population drinking over a third of all alcohol used—averaging approximately 8 standard drinks per day per person. This group of people is targeted when they might be feeling particularly vulnerable.<sup>5</sup> The Darwin

5 FARE in collaboration with the Centre for Alcohol Policy Research. The research uses the 2019 NDSHS

campaign against Dan Murphys was successful, however under investor pressure, Woolworths who also own the BWS chain, simply changed the parent company name to Endeavour Drinks: to continue holding their hugely profitable alcohol and gambling revenue streams.

In mid-2016, Iltja Ntjarra artists invited leading Australian artist Tony Albert to hold collage workshops, confronting matters like homelessness and health—key issues the Federal Intervention into Northern Territory Indigenous communities has failed to address.<sup>6</sup> From these and other workshops, emerged inspired and collectively executed counter-intervention artworks. In NIRIN, the 2020 Sydney Biennale curated by Brook Andrew, the artists' presented mobile 'Homeless' works painted on plastic 'divorce bags'.

data. See the FARE website at <https://fare.org.au/new-report-alcohol-companies-reliant-on-people-who-drink-at-heaviest-levels/>

6 Prime Minister John Howard dramatically introduced The Intervention on the eve of the 2006 Federal election.

The sister exhibition, titled Particulate Matter: A Fossil Fuelled Future at The Cross Art Projects, presented works mapping the gas pipeline from Mereenie and Palm Valley Gas Fields (you pass them on your trip to Hermannsburg), to export ports in Darwin and Queensland and its political framing as 'Develop the North'. As with grog, the real intervention is corporate: mining—specifically industrial fracking, the industry's theft of the waters of artesian rivers and continued alienation and displacement of traditional owners.

Albert Namatjira and the generations that followed are resilient and tenacious. They do not fight alone. In 1995, Dr Charles Perkins called a public meeting in Mpartwe to stem the rivers of grog and the damage done. In the sublime One Too Many, the fight continues.

**'TJINA NURNA-  
KA, PMARRA  
NURN-KANHA,  
ITLA ITLA  
NURN-KANHA.'**

**OUR FAMILY,  
OUR COUNTRY,  
OUR LEGACY,  
DOES NOT  
CHANGE.**





Vanessa Inkamala  
Winding Road, 2021  
Watercolour (finished  
with cold wax) on steel  
or sheet aluminium  
(recycled road sign)  
75 x 75 cm  
[428-21]

\$ 2,360



Vanessa Inkamala  
Beware Falling Rocks, 2021  
Watercolour (finished  
with cold wax) on steel  
or sheet aluminium  
(recycled road sign)  
75 x 75 cm  
[449-21]

\$ 2,360



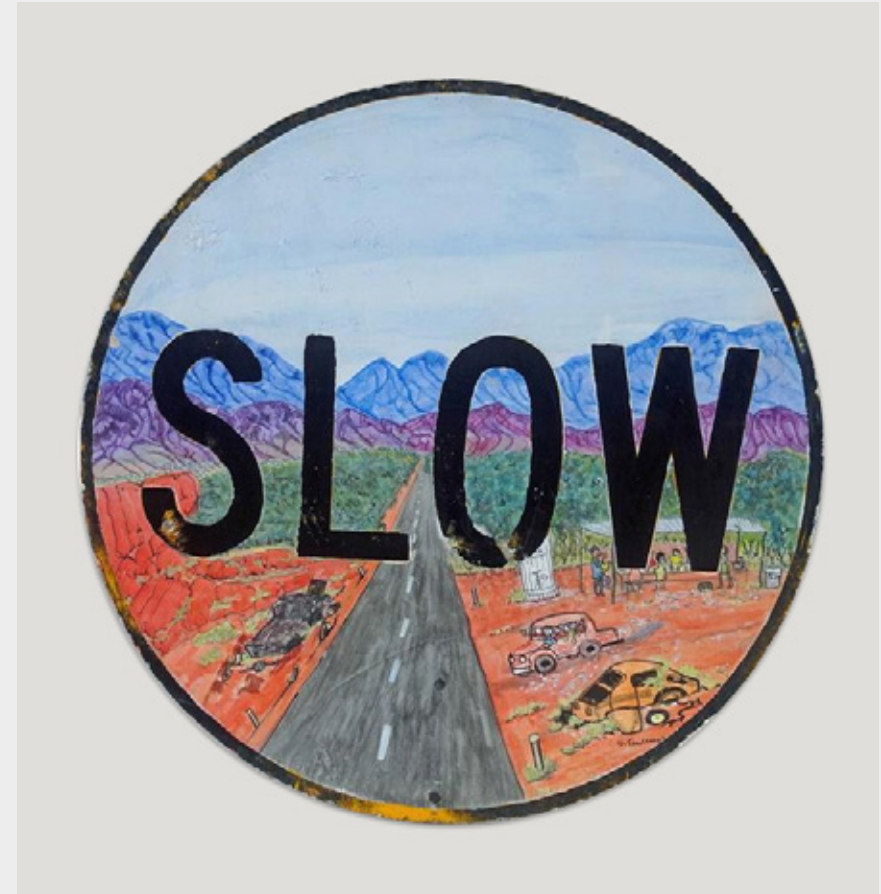
Selma Nunay Coulthard  
Camel, 2021  
Watercolour (finished  
with cold wax) on steel  
or sheet aluminium  
(recycled road sign)  
75 x 75 cm  
[448-21]

\$ 2,360



Selma Nunay Coulthard  
SLOW, 2021  
Watercolour (finished  
with cold wax) on steel  
or sheet aluminium  
(recycled road sign)  
60 x 60 cm  
[445-21]

\$ 1,800



Betty Wheeler Namatjira  
Tjoritja: U 210 KM; West  
MacDonnell Ranges NT, 2021  
Watercolour (finished  
with cold wax) on steel  
or sheet aluminium  
(recycled road sign)  
45 x 45 cm  
[498-21]

**\$ 1,135**



Marcus Wheeler  
Utju / Areyonga,  
NT, U 10 km], 2021  
Watercolour (finished  
with cold wax) on steel  
or sheet aluminium  
(recycled road sign)  
45 x 45 cm  
[500-21]

**\$ 1,135**





Selma Nunay Coulthard  
181 KM, 2021  
Watercolour (finished  
with cold wax) on steel  
or sheet aluminium  
(recycled road sign)  
45 x 45 cm  
[427-21]

\$ 1,135



Betty Wheeler Namatjira  
Tjoritja (West MacDonnell  
Ranges), 2021  
Watercolour (finished  
with cold wax) on steel  
or sheet aluminium  
(recycled road sign)  
45 x 45 cm  
[499-21]

\$ 1,135



Selma Nunay Coulthard  
HB 200 KM, 2022  
Watercolour (finished  
with cold wax) on steel  
or sheet aluminium  
(recycled road sign)  
45 x 45 cm  
[31-22]

\$ 1,135



Vanessa Inkamala  
Don't Drink Drive, 2021  
Watercolour (finished  
with cold wax) on steel  
or sheet aluminium  
(recycled road sign)  
45 x 45 cm  
[481-21]

\$ 1,135



Delray Inkamala  
Galah in the Bush, 2022  
Acrylic on aluminium  
(repurposed beer can)  
12 x 10 cm  
[4-22]

\$ 350

Dianne Inkamala  
Old Windmill, 2021  
Acrylic on aluminium  
(repurposed beer can)  
12 x 9 cm  
[461-21]

\$ 350

Selma Nunay Coulthard  
V8 Troopy, 2022  
Acrylic on aluminium  
(repurposed beer can)  
14 x 9 cm  
[32-22]

\$ 350

Dianne Inkamala  
Two Galahs, 2021  
Acrylic on aluminium  
(repurposed beer can)  
14 x 9 cm  
[467-21]

\$ 350

Dianne Inkamala  
Camping & Swimming, 2021  
Acrylic on aluminium  
(repurposed beer can)  
12 x 10 cm  
[469-21]

\$ 350

Delray Inkamala  
Galah on a Branch, 2022  
Acrylic on aluminium  
(repurposed beer can)  
13 x 9 cm  
[6-22]

\$ 350





Delray Inkamala  
Ntaria School, 2021  
Acrylic on aluminium  
(repurposed beer can)  
13 x 11 cm  
(484-21)

\$ 350

Vanessa Inkamala  
Cattle Yard, 2021  
Acrylic on aluminium  
(repurposed beer can)  
12 x 10 cm  
(465-21)

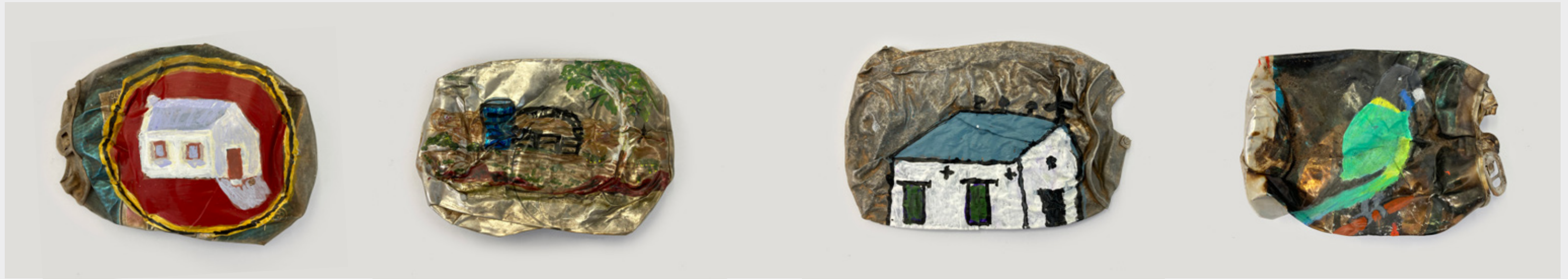
\$ 350

Mervyn Rubuntja  
Old Hermannsburg Mission Church, 2021  
Acrylic on aluminium  
(repurposed beer can)  
9 x 14 cm  
(468-21)

\$ 350

Delray Inkamala  
Parrot in the Bush, 2022  
Acrylic on aluminium  
(repurposed beer can)  
9 x 13 cm  
(5-22)

\$ 350



Dianne Inkamala  
Drink Driving, 2021  
Acrylic on aluminium  
(repurposed beer can)  
13 x 11 cm  
(462-21)

\$ 350



Benita Clement  
Old Can, 2021  
Acrylic on aluminium  
(repurposed beer can)  
8 x 14 cm  
(457-21)

\$ 350



Dianne Inkamala  
Old Hermannsburg Mission Church, 2021  
Acrylic on aluminium  
(repurposed beer can)  
9 x 14 cm  
(471-21)

\$ 350



Vanessa Inkamala  
Drink Driving, 2021  
Acrylic on aluminium  
(repurposed beer can)  
9 x 13 cm  
(463-21)

\$ 350







← L TO R

### Works from Tjuwanpa Art Centre, Tjuwanpa Outstation

Michelle Pareroultja, Wild Passionfruit: Rraatninga, 2022, acrylic on aluminium, 10 x 12 cm, (65-22)

\$ 350 each ↓

Delray Inkamala, Redtail Black Cockatoos: Erraarnta, 2022, acrylic on aluminium, 10 x 12 cm, (73-22)

Bromwyn Lankin, Wild Flower, 2022, acrylic on aluminium, 10 x 12 cm, (69-22)

Delray Inkamala, Redtail Black Cockatoos: Erraarnta, 2022, acrylic on aluminium, 10 x 12 cm, (74-22)

Linda Ebatarinja, Wild Flowers, 2022, acrylic on aluminium, 10 x 12 cm, (70-22)

Delray Inkamala, Galah: Elinta, 2022, acrylic on aluminium, 10 x 12 cm, (72-22)

Ramona Malbunka, Bush Tomato Flower, 2022, acrylic on aluminium, 10 x 12 cm, (62-22)

Linda Ebatarinja, Red Kangaroo: Arra, 2022, acrylic on aluminium, 10 x 12 cm, (71-22)

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Betty Wheeler  
Namatjira, Tjoritja:  
U 210 KM West  
MacDonnell Ranges  
NT, 2021, watercolour  
(finished with cold  
wax) on steel or sheet  
aluminium (recycled  
road sign), 45 x 45 cm  
(498-21) (Detail)





Chips Mackinolt, [Damn Murphy's 1: Higher Death Price, Guarantee\\*](#), digital print, edition 1/3

\$ 350



Chips Mackinolt, [Damn Murphy's 1: Higher Jail Price, Guarantee\\*](#), digital print, edition 1/3

\$ 350



## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

**Benita Clements** (b. 1980)  
The great granddaughter of Albert Namatjira and daughter of artist Gwenda Namatjira. Her recent work juxtaposes traditional Hermannsburg landscapes with symbols from contemporary culture.

**Selma Nunay Coulthard** (b.1954)  
Grew up in Hermannsburg where she went to school with fellow artist Ivy Pareroultja. She has a kinship relationship. Watching the Namatjira brothers paining in Ntaria inspired her to be an artist.

**Dellina Inkamala** (b.1984)  
Lives and works Mparntwe (Alice Springs) Western Aranda.

**Reinhold Inkamala** (b. 1974)  
Albert Namatjira is his great-

uncle, and Vanessa Inkamala is his stister. He is and known for imaginative and witty watercolour paintings.

**Vanessa Inkamala** (b. 1968)  
Grew up at Ntaria (Hermannsburg). Her grandmother’s brother is Albert Namatjira. She is the niece of award winning artist Ivy Pareroultja who nursed Vanessa and her brother Reinhold Inkamala, both painters.

**Chips Mackinolty**  
Born in Sydney, lives and works in Mparntwe and Darwin. Chips is revered as Australia’s leading politically inspired artist.

**Marisa Maher**  
A Western Aranda woman and Iltja Ntjarra’s assistant manager where she has curated over twenty exhibitions since 2014.

**Mervyn Rubuntja**  
Continues a tradition began by his father Wenten Rubuntja, an important political leader in central Australia, chair of the Central Land Council and senior lawman, by painting ‘land rights painting’. Albert Namatjira taught his father to paint in watercolour. In 2021 Hubert Pareroultja and Mervyn Rubuntja won the Wandjuk Marika 3D Memorial Award (NATSIAA) with their large-scale work, ‘Through the veil of time’.

**Betty Wheeler Namatjira**  
Namatjira’s living granddaughter and was raised by Albert and his first wife Rubina.

**Marcus Wheeler**  
Husband of Betty Wheeler Namatjira.

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## ABOUT ILTJA NTJARRA

Iltja Ntjarra (Many Hands) is a not-for-profit Art Centre, proudly Aboriginal owned and directed. It is home of the Namatjira watercolour artists. The Art Centre was established by Ngurratjuta/Pmara Ntjarra Aboriginal Corporation in 2004 and incorporated as a separate entity in 2016. The Centre is strongly committed to improving economic participation of Aboriginal people and maintaining cultural heritage. It was established for Western Aranda artists to come together to paint, share and learn new techniques and ideas.

Iltja Ntjarra has a special focus on supporting the ‘Hermannsburg School’ style watercolour artists, who continue to paint in the tradition

of their grandfather and relative, Albert Namatjira, arguably one of Australia’s most famous artists of the 20th century. Albert Namatjira taught his children to follow in his unique style, who have since passed this knowledge on to their children, which has resonated in a legacy of watercolour artists in the Central Desert region. By continuing his legacy, these artists sustain an important piece of living history.

Iltja Ntjarra is proud of its ethical work practices and aims to return the greatest possible percentage of sales to the artist.

Iltja Ntjarra acknowledges the role of Ngurratjuta/Pmara Ntjarra Aboriginal Corporation to the establishment and development of the Art Centre and thanks it for its ongoing support.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Curated by Selma Coulthard, Marisa Maher and Iltja Ntjarra with assistance from Jo Holder. To the artists and to Iltja Ntjarra Art Centre: Iris Bendor, Marisa Maher, Koren Wheatley and Georges Bureau. At The Cross Art Projects: Belle Blau, Simon Blau, Phillip Boulten and Susan Gilligan. Vicki Gillick at PAAC, Dr Jacqueline Healy a Melbourne University Medical Museum and Chips Mackinolty at AMSANT.

## CONVERSATIONS

Saturday 12 March  
Patricia Adjei (Arts Practice Director First Nations Arts and Culture, Australia Council) introduces Ken McGregor (Author of A life and Times of Albert Namatjira), speaking



with Iris Bendor (Itlja Ntjarra, manager). Profits from the sale of this book go to Itlja Ntjarra Many Hands Art Centre.

Saturday 19 March

Michael Kempson of Cicada Press at UNSW, will speak on prints made by the artists in 2016 and 2019.

Note: the artists and co-curators of One Too Many will attend the exhibition, in conjunction with the Biennale of Sydney, once the Covid crisis in Mparntwe (Alice Springs) stabilises.

**ABOUT THE  
CROSS ART PROJECTS**

The Cross Art Projects foregrounds contemporary work that reflects the multiple relationships between art and life, art and the public sphere and explores the boundaries of this context. We are attentive to the local without sacrificing the scope of an international view. The Cross Art Projects presents curated exhibitions and work by artists who create critical projects that question and/or reflect our present circumstances and whose work has a rigorous conceptual foundation. Projects are enhanced with conversations and round-tables by local activist, architectural and heritage groups.

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We recognise the unceded land of the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation within which we live and create. We pay respects to the traditional custodians, promising to listen and learn.

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[www.crossart.com.au](http://www.crossart.com.au)  
[www.manyhandsart.com.au](http://www.manyhandsart.com.au)

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