

Ngatchu Yarta — My Country



The Breaking Ground Professional Development Award sets out to elevate and accelerate the careers of South Australian regional artists by providing the support to push the boundaries of their practice into new and uncharted territory.

Since its inception in 2011 five artists have pursued their professional and creative aspirations, supported by a mentor as they work towards a major solo exhibition at a metropolitan Adelaide gallery.

In 2021 we celebrate the 10-year anniversary of Breaking Ground with Port Augusta based Adnyamathanha and Luritja artist Juanella McKenzie's first major solo exhibition *Ngatchu Yarta – My Country*.

This body of work is the result of field-studies and archival research undertaken by McKenzie into her homelands in the Flinders Ranges. Spending time on Country and working closely with Elders has enabled her to deepen her custodial knowledge, as has accessing the cultural recordings of her late Grandfather and senior lore man Malcolm McKenzie Snr. In addition McKenzie studied a range of objects from the South Australian Museum's collection.

The resulting works transport the audience into the heart of Adnyamathanha Yarta (Country) through their colours, textures, materials, techniques and storytelling. This body of work is an ambitious new leap for McKenzie and positions her practice as a powerful form of cultural continuation in a contemporary world.

It is our pleasure to welcome you to the 2021 Breaking Ground exhibition *Ngatchu Yarta – My Country* by Juanella McKenzie.

The artist would like to thank

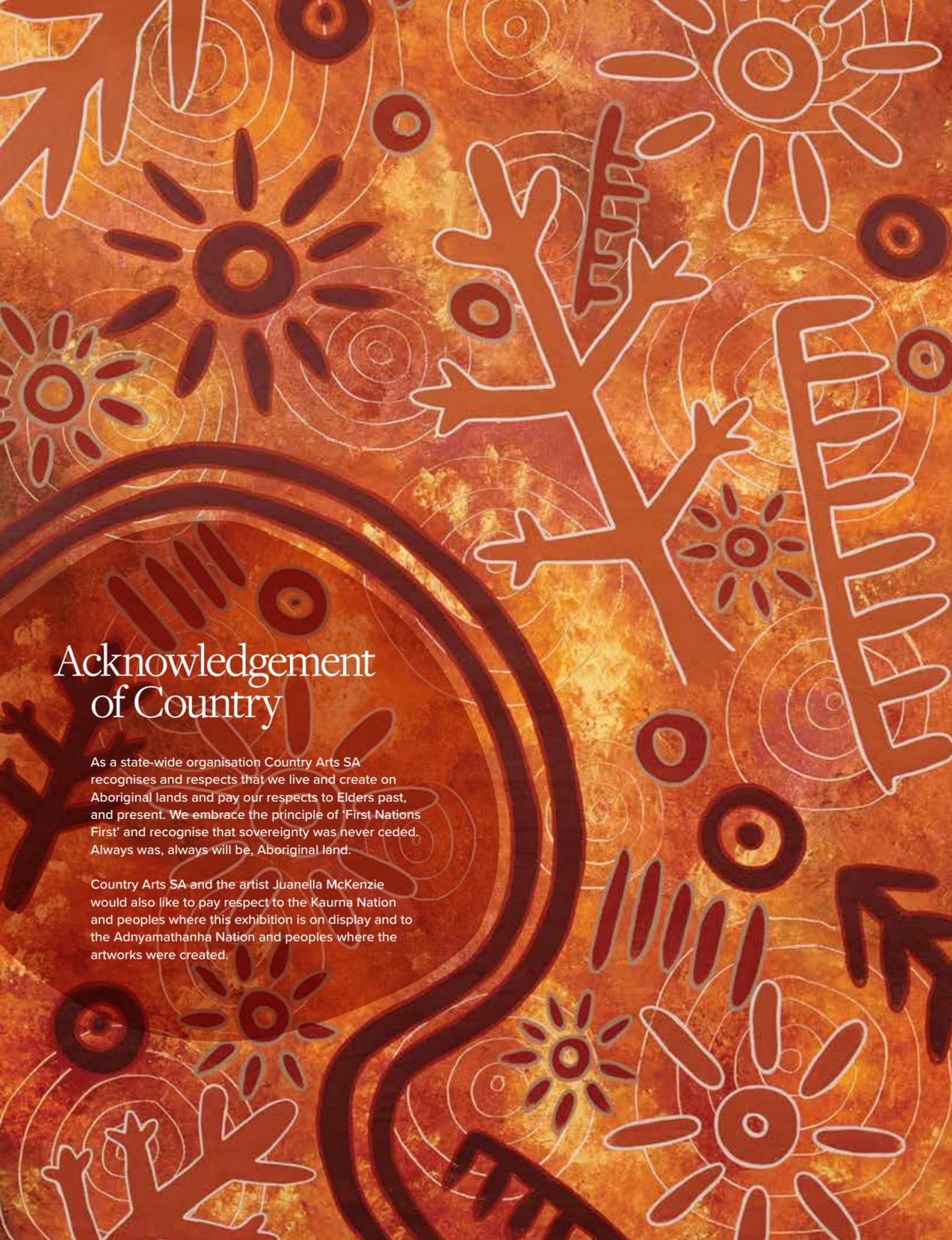
I would like to thank my family, my mentor Jessica Clark, Country Arts SA and SALA for the support and for making this exhibition possible.

Country Arts SA

Anthony Peluso, Chief Executive/Executive Director
Meryl De Nys, Arts and Culture Leader
Louisa Norman, Executive Programmer
Lauren Mustillo, Visual Arts Program Manager
Lee Towton, Visual Arts Support Officer

Graphic design by Beth Wuttke
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This Country Arts SA Visual Arts Professional Development Award provides a practising contemporary visual artist from regional South Australia the opportunity to develop a body of work for exhibition in a major gallery space in metropolitan Adelaide and receive a mentorship opportunity to further their career.



Acknowledgement of Country

As a state-wide organisation Country Arts SA recognises and respects that we live and create on Aboriginal lands and pay our respects to Elders past, and present. We embrace the principle of 'First Nations First' and recognise that sovereignty was never ceded. Always was, always will be, Aboriginal land.

Country Arts SA and the artist Juanella McKenzie would also like to pay respect to the Kaurna Nation and peoples where this exhibition is on display and to the Adnyamathanha Nation and peoples where the artworks were created.

From Juanella McKenzie

I invite audiences on a journey deep within the Flinders Ranges, as seen through my eyes and heart as an Adnyamathanha and Luritja artist and traditional owner.

The exhibition presents a new body of work that melds cultural knowledges, materials and techniques with recent research and creative experimentations undertaken over the last year. My multidisciplinary works include painting, weaving, textiles and installation. Each work is grounded in Muda (Dreaming) stories and the importance of cultural continuation and the exchange of knowledge through intergenerational connection.

The importance of knowledge sharing, culture, and family are at the heart of my creative practice – attesting the vital role of culture, community, and Country, and their inextricable link as one, while ensuring a powerful form of cultural continuation in

a contemporary world. Together, the works included in *Ngatchu Yarta – My Country*, visually and energetically embody the voices of my ancestors, collectively existing as material manifestations of Muda stories that have been passed down through generations over many millennia.

Ngatchu Yarta – My Country offers viewers a visually dynamic and exploratory insight into the deep connection, custodial care, and wonder felt for the Adnyamathanha Country I so truly love and where I feel I belong.

Cover: *Artunyi Vualli (Seven Sisters Constellation)*, 2021, emu feathers, quandong seeds, hemp waxed thread, dimensions variable.
Left: *Malka (Mark/Markings)* (detail), 2021, acrylic on canvas, 104 x 71.5cm.
Below: *Mayaka (Bush Banana)*, 2020, acrylic on canvas, 65.5 x 108.5cm.
Right: *Artunyi Vitnah*, 2021, acrylic on canvas, 110 x 148cm.
Reverse side: *Urdu and Virida Blanket*, 2021, kangaroo and possum pelts, hemp waxed thread, dimensions variable.

