MEDIA RELEASE

Major First Nations production Gapu Ŋupan returns home to the NT

Large-scale music and dance production *Gapu Ŋupan (Chasing the Rainbow)* will return home for an NT tour this August, with performances at Garma Festival and Darwin Festival.

This follows the work's acclaimed World Premiere at Asia TOPA in Naarm / Melbourne in 2025 and marks its first presentation in the Northern Territory.

Created over five years by artists from North East Arnhem Land and Taiwan, Gapu Ŋupan brings together Yolŋu songlines with the storytelling, music and dance traditions of the Paiwan and Amis peoples of Taiwan.

The work explores what can emerge when cultures meet, share stories, recognise shared values, and imagine a future vision together.

The production will first be performed at Garma Festival on Yolŋu Country on 1 August before opening Darwin Festival with two performances from 5-6 August.

The production is co-led by Rachael Wallis, Rirratjingu Cultural Director and Songman Banula Marika, and Amis artist, composer and co-artistic director Suming Rupi.

Created and produced by Miku Performing Arts, Hui Jia Creatives, Kath Papas Productions and Artback NT, *Gapu Ŋupan* received a four-star review at its World Premiere at Asia TOPA, with The Age describing it as “a gently uplifting collaboration” and an expression of solidarity through art.

Co-artistic director and choreographer Rachael Wallis said presenting the work at home had always been central to the artists’ hopes for *Gapu Ŋupan*, both to North East Arnhem Land and to Taiwan. It will be presented in Taiwan next year.

“Bringing *Gapu Ŋupan* home to the Northern Territory, and especially to Yolŋu Country, is deeply significant for everyone involved. This has been a slow-burn collaboration, built through years of trust and exchange.

“The work began with a simple hope: to bring our people together. What has grown from that is a performance shaped by family, Country, culture and long-standing relationships.

“*Gapu Ŋupan* explores shared histories and struggles, but it is also about cultural strength, pride and the future we can imagine when we work together.”

Taiwanese arts leaders visit the Top End

The tour also coincides with a visit to Garramilla / Darwin by a delegation of Taiwanese representatives from the Taiwan Indigenous Peoples Cultural Development Center (IPCDC), including their Director General Giljegiljaw Pakedavai, program manager Yuling Chou, translator Baru Elutu Pavavalijung and four dancers: Lo Kuan-Chien, Hsu Hung-Wei, Ciwas Takyo and Yen Kai-Hsin.

In June, Artback NT led a delegation of First Nations arts and cultural leaders from the Northern Territory to Taiwan. The reciprocal Taiwanese delegation will visit Garramilla / Darwin in August, coinciding with Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair and Darwin Festival. Delegates will attend *Gapu Nupan* and take part in meetings and events focused on future residencies, touring and collaborative projects.

The visit includes the signing of a Memorandum of Collaboration, strengthening the relationship between IPCDC and Artback NT and laying the groundwork for future exhibitions, festival exchanges, and performing arts collaborations.

An official lunch reception will also be held at Government House, hosted by His Honour the Honourable David Connolly, Administrator of the Northern Territory, and Ms Susan Brosnan Oly.

Artback NT's relationship with Taiwan began in 2016 through touring and musical collaboration and later developed into a reciprocal Indigenous Artist in Residence program. Rachael Wallis took part in that program in 2018, marking the beginning of *Gapu Nupan*'s creative journey. Applications for the next Artist in Residence program will open in 2027.

Artback NT CEO Michelle Bell said the performances and delegation represent an important meeting point in a relationship that has been developing for over a decade.

"*Gapu Nupan* shows what can grow when artists are given the time and space to build relationships across cultures. Having the Taiwanese delegation here as the work returns to Yolŋu Country and the Northern Territory brings that story full circle.

"By bringing arts leaders together face to face, the delegation opens the door to future exchanges, residencies and creative collaborations."

Performance details

Garma Festival
Gulkula ceremonial site, Gove Peninsula
Saturday 1 August 2026
Garma Festival is sold out.

Darwin Festival
INPEX Sunset Stage, Civic Park, Garramilla/Darwin
Wednesday 5 and Thursday 6 August 2026, 7pm
Tickets: Gapu Ŋupan (Chasing the Rainbow) | Darwin Festival

Media contact

For media enquiries, images, to come and review a show or arrange an interview, please contact Emily Gorton, Communications and Marketing Manager at Artback NT: communications@artbacknt.com.au | 0439 854 280

About Artback NT

Artback NT develops and presents creative works from across the Northern Territory – to and from some of Australia's most remote locations.

We work collaboratively with artists and communities to create and present high-quality arts and cultural experiences not readily available to regional, remote, and very remote communities who are often left off the touring map.

Our Performing Arts Development and Touring Program delivers dynamic theatre, music, and dance performances, as well as creative workshops to audiences around Australia.

Working primarily with NT based artists, producers, and companies, Artback NT is passionate about sharing the strong and unique stories of the Northern Territory.

This NT tour is supported by Garma Festival, Darwin Festival, Rirratjingu Aboriginal Corporation, Ministry of Culture Republic of China (Taiwan), Indigenous Languages and Arts, Creative Australia.

The Northern Territory Government has also committed funding through its Strategic Initiatives and Partnerships Arts Grants program to support the Taiwan Artists Exchange program from 2026 to 2029.