



Malandarri Festival

Friday 16 – Saturday 17 June, 2023



Presented by Artback NT
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2023 Malandarri Festival
Borroloola, Roper Gulf NT
Friday 16 – Saturday 17 June

Big Screen, stories and sounds under the stars, program highlights for the 10 year anniversary of Malandarri Festival!

A spoken word performance, film screenings and a fashion show are the latest additions to the much-loved Malandarri Festival 10th anniversary celebrations!

Named after the traditional name for Borroloola, *Malandarri*, meaning freshwater spring, the 2023 Malandarri Festival opens on Friday night, 16 June, with a performance from Borroloola poet and spoken word artist Margaret Allwood accompanied with music by Kuya James.

Saturday night highlights include a fashion show and performances by soulful singer songwriter Caiti Baker, popular local bands, and the Borroloola Women's Cultural Song Project, *Arrkula Yinbayarra – Together We Sing*.

This year's festival goers will also be treated to the premier screening of *Duwarra Wujara* (Two Young Men), an exquisite animation that tells how Country was named, bringing to life the history, traditional customs, and songs from the Gulf Country.

"The big screen is an exciting addition to the 2-night event celebrating the festivals' 10th anniversary" remarks Artback NT CEO Shay Vigona Goudge, "and Duwarra Wujara is visually stunning, short film", she adds.

Duwarra Wujara is a collaborative project by Yanyuwa families with long term friend and anthropologist John Bradley.

Shay Vigona Goudge goes on to acknowledge the work of Marlene Timothy, as Artback NT's Cultural Events Coordinator, and Malandarri Festival Director, based in Artback NT's Borroloola for the last ten years.

"2023 marks the ten-year anniversary of the Malandarri Festival under the strong and dedicated creative direction of Marlene Timothy", says Vigona Goudge. "It's her passion to instil traditional knowledge in the young people and engage the whole community, that makes the program so strong each year", she adds.

As a Yanyuwa/Garrwa woman from Borroloola, cultural and linguistic maintenance is very important to Timothy, so the preservation, revitalisation, and promotion of local languages is the foundation of the festivals' program content as well as the workshop activities throughout the community in the lead up to the event. *"We teach our language to our children, through songs that they get to perform at the festival each year. That keeps our language alive, but also many of the traditions, which would fade away in the young people's minds, if we didn't teach them the songs".*

"Festival fever starts several weeks ahead with workshops and rehearsals. This year, Caiti Baker, Djuki Mala dancers and textile artist Laura Shipp are amongst the mentors who are getting the next generation of performers stage ready"! Marlene Timothy, Festival Director



The Malandarri Festival is probably best known for its traditional dance program, a schedule of lively performances from groups around the region dancing and singing the stories from the past - of connection to country and to culture. The audience is invited to sit under the festoon lights to watch and listen to the dreamtime / creation stories being re-enacted and kept alive for future story tellers.

The Malandarri Festival is a family friendly, drug and alcohol-free event. Entry each day is by gold coin donation. Seniors and children are free. Bring a picnic blanket and enjoy the food available to purchase from the market stalls. Gates open at 5pm on Friday and 3pm on Saturday.

The Malandarri Festival is part of Artback NT's Remote Events Program, formally known as Indigenous Traditional Dance Program (ITDP), which was established to support the Northern Territory's artistic and cultural practices for inter-generational learning, through the relationships between Elders and young people, and for the continuation of cultural leadership.

Artback NT proudly works with artists from around the Northern Territory to develop and tour their work to local, national, and international audiences.

The 2023 Malandarri Festival is supported by The McArthur River Mine Community Benefits Trust, The Northern Territory Government, The Australia Council for the Arts, Roper River Gulf Regional Council, Mabunji Aboriginal Resource Indigenous Corporation and Mawurli and Wirriwangkuma Aboriginal Corporation (MAWA).

For interviews and media enquiries please contact

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