

Case study

The Girringun Collection

Details

What:

The *Girringun Collection* is suite of arts products created, produced and featuring work by artists from the Girringun Aboriginal Art Centre.

The collection was developed through a creative enterprise collaboration between Girringun Aboriginal Art Centre and Independent Arts Management (IAM). The collaboration aimed to identify, plan and produce a suite of art products for national and international audiences.

In developing the range, consultation was undertaken with business and cultural communities to determine the types of products and price points and to gauge interest levels from stockists. Sessions and skills development workshops were hosted to assist artists to translate their art into affordable, high quality, small scale and collectible objects.

The *Girringun Collection* was launched in July 2014.

When:

2013 – 2014

Where:

The Girringun Aboriginal Art Centre, Cardwell, Far North Queensland.

The centre, represents artists from nine Traditional Owner Groups, the Nywaigi, Gugu Badhun, Warrgamay, Warungnu, Bandjin, Girramay, Gulgnay, Jirrbal and Djiru people.

Other communities involved in this project included Tully, Murray Upper and Mission Beach.



This beautiful scarf features Dragonfly artwork by Sally Murray, and is digitally printed on 120g viscose.

Key stats:

- The project supported 11 artists/cultural workers
- 9 new products were developed for sale
- The collection was launched at the Cairns Indigenous Art Fair 2014 to an 18,000+ audiences

Arts Queensland contribution:

\$55,000 – Projects and Programs Fund

Contact for further information:

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Links:

www.art.girringun.com.au/art-shop

Outcomes

- Sales and orders for the new products have exceeded expectations proving market demand. Sales and production targets have been revised accordingly.
- Working with consultants IAM, art centre staff and artists were exposed to and engaged with current market trends and demands, examples of pricing and packaging of competitors, development of products derived from their artworks and creation of new products. They also observed retail sales and presentation and general client liaison.

Everyone involved in this project has learned something – the artists and board have learned about merchandising, art centre staff have learned about sales and distribution, we have re-invigorated the skill of string making and more

- Products from the range are now stocked in most major cultural institutions on the east Coast of Australia. Giringun is also in negotiation with a major international museum to stock the collection in their store. National corporate event organisers have also registered strong interest in the collection.



This cushion is screenprinted with the Kingfisher story by Ethel Murray. Linen fabric with zipper 46 cm square.

Learnings and reflections

This collaboration has resulted in the production of a distinct and unique collection of market ready merchandise featuring the work of Giringun artists and stories. Anecdotal feedback indicated that artists, other Traditional Owners of the area and people from the broader community are proud of the new product range.

The partnership between the Arts Centre and IAM was important to the success of the collection. IAM staff guided staff and artists through the complex process of professionally merchandising and marketing the collection.

The project involved all levels of the arts organisation including the art centre staff, artists, volunteers, administration and management. The process of determining which artworks to use and which products to develop was difficult and took longer than expected. It was important to the centre, that the collection include as many artists as possible.

Giringun Collection has provided another means to profile artists. The collection has also provided an additional form of economic return for artists by developing a market ready product.

This targeted project has provided us with a new way of promoting the artists who work with the art centre. We are finding that a lot of visitors to the centre love the artworks but are buying the merchandise as they are cheaper, smaller and easier to transport. We are also finding that the smaller items are being purchased as corporate gifts or for sending as gifts, so it means we have a wider distribution.