

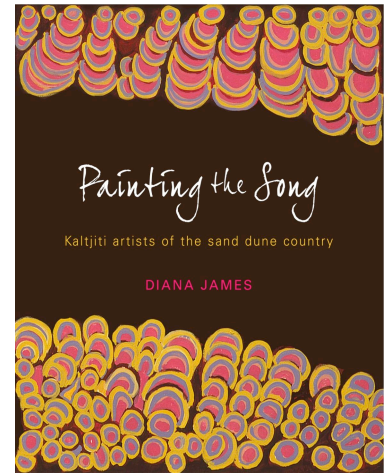


## MEDIA RELEASE

April 15 2009

Important Aboriginal art book of the Pitjantjatjara lands to be launched in Adelaide April 22, 2009.

### **Painting the song: Kaltjiti artists of the sand dune country** Diana James



In 2005 the artists of Kaltjiti Arts in the Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara (PY) lands of northern South Australia decided to record their culture for future generations. With Beverley Peacock, arts centre manager since 1990, they approached Diana James, Kaltjiti's first art adviser 1975–76, with the suggestion to collaborate on a book.

A fluent Pitjantjatjara speaker, who has worked in the region for more than 30 years, like Geoffrey Bardon at Papunya and Winifred Hilliard at Ernabella, James' life has also become intrinsically interwoven with those of the artists.

From 2006 a series of extensive trips were made to the artists' traditional country across thousands of kilometres of South Australia, the Northern Territory and Western Australia.

Now this groundbreaking new book documents the artists' stories along with the development of Kaltjiti Arts – from its humble beginnings in a primitive tin shed to a leading contemporary arts centre. As well, James documents for the first time the modern history of batik, carving, weaving and painting in Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara lands. This includes, on the artists' encouragement, the first publication of some rare 1940s photographs of their forebears by anthropologist Charles Mountford along with fascinating vignettes of 40 years of their artistic development.

A rare blend of scholarly research and first hand account, *Painting the Song* makes an important contribution to the lexicon of Aboriginal cultural history and is destined to become a classic on the subject.

#### **BOOK LAUNCH**

**FLINDERS UNIVERSITY CITY GALLERY, STATE LIBRARY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA, NORTH TERRACE, ADELAIDE.**

**APRIL 22, 2009**

**6-8 PM**

**By Justice Thomas Gray, Supreme Court of South Australia**

**Inma performance by Kaltjiti Artists**

**Speakers:** Diana James, author, Beverley Peacock, Kaltjiti Arts manager, Susan McCulloch, publisher.

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*Author Diana James with artist Jillian Davey discussing her batik, Araluen Arts Centre, 1992*

## THE AUTHOR

Diana James has worked with the Pitjantjatjara people of Central Australia since 1975 as a student of their language and culture, and reciprocally as an advisor in the arts and cultural tourism community owned enterprises. She worked as an arts advisor at Kaltjiti (Fregon) in the APY Lands and as a bi-lingual teacher and arts educator at Papunya, Docker River and Pipalyatjara. Diana, together with Mantatjara Wilson, initiated the first meeting of the NYP Women's Council in 1980 and served on the Council's executive for two years. She was the co-founder and manager of the eco-cultural Aboriginal tourism business Desert Tracks Pitjantjatjara Tours with the Angatja family from 1988 to 2000. Diana holds a doctorate of anthropology from ANU and is fluent in the Pitjantjatjara language. She is currently project officer with the Canning Stock route project with the Centre for Cross Cultural research, Australian National University.

### **Painting the song: Kaltjiti artists of the sand dune country**

McCulloch & McCulloch Australian Art Books in partnership with Kaltjiti Arts.

RRP: \$59.95. 172 pp. HB. Jacketed. 270 mm x 210mm.

ISBN 978-0-9804494-6-4. May 2009 release.

### **AUTHOR AND ARTISTS AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEW ADELAIDE 21-23 APRIL 2009.**

Author Diana James, art centre manager Beverly Peacock and artists of Kaltjiti including Matjangka Norris, Tali Tali Pompey, Kathy Maringka and Marita Baker, available for interview Adelaide 21-23 April 2009

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