



MEDIA RELEASE

Clay on Country, ceramics from the central desert opened at Cairns Gallery on March 2. The exhibition will tour through QLD, NSW, VIC, TAS, and WA from 2024 to 2026.

Co-curated by Jo Foster and Neridah Stockley, and toured by Artback NT, *Clay on Country, ceramics from the central desert*, is an impressive survey of ceramic practice that includes over thirty artists and collectives. Some are established ceramic artists others are incorporating clay into their practice for the first time, all have produced accomplished insightful and contemporary works that reflect the culturally and historically rich and complex region where they live and work.

"Many communities and cultures call the Northern Territory home, and we value the contributions and enrichment that come from this diversity" says Shay Vigona-Goudge, Chief Executive Officer, Artback NT, the Northern Territory's key development and touring agency that is sending Clay on Country on a 3-year National Tour, to public art galleries in QLD, NSW, VIC, TAS, and WA.

"We hope Clay on Country's audiences across Australia will find, amongst the stories told through this exhibition, reference points and resonance with their own stories, for while the artists in the exhibition share their uniquely Territorian experiences, they simultaneously speak of the complexity of our nation's history".

It is the exercise of recalling and reflecting, of truth telling, and deep diving with all its occasional discomfort, that Clay on Country does with such grace and generosity.

Clay on Country, ceramics from the central desert was first exhibited at the Araluen Arts Centre, during the 16th Australian Ceramics Triennale, *Apmere Mparntwe*/this place Alice Springs in 2022. To support the creative aspirations of artists in the region, several skills development projects were undertaken throughout 2021. Artback NT, in partnership with Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Education, facilitated workshops for remote community artists at Walkatjara Arts, Kaltukatjara Arts and Engawala Community. Additional projects were facilitated by Artback NT staff with studio support from Central Craft for Iltja Ntjarra Artists and Akeyulerre Healing Centre in Alice Springs.

A full list of artists and collectives is available on the Artback NT website:
www.artbacknt.com.au/show/clay-oncountry/

The exhibition is Audio Described, and accompanied by an Education Kit for Schools, as well as 100-page full colour catalogue with essays by Jo Foster, curator; Hannah Kothe, writer, arts manager and board member of The Australian Ceramics Association; and interviews with artists Judith Pungkarta Inkamala (Hermannsburg Potters), Anne Nginyangka Thompson, and Alison Milyika Carroll (Ernabella Arts).

About the curators:

Jo Foster is a multi-disciplinary art professional of many years standing passionate about building community and understanding through the arts. She worked in museum education in Sydney before

moving to the desert where she has worked closely with First Nations and regionally based artists and arts organisations for over twenty years. She was Visual Arts Manager, Artback NT from 2016-2022.

Neridah Stockley trained at the National Art School in Sydney, graduating with a Bachelor of Fine Arts, Painting major in 2001. Stockley spent over 20 years living and working in the NT, working at many Indigenous Art Centres, including Papunya Tula Artists, Bindi Inc, Maruku Arts and more, as well as being a visual artist with a focus on painting and ceramics in her own right. Neridah now lives and works in Lutruwita (Tasmania) on Paredareme country. She was the Visual Arts Touring Manager, Artback NT from 2008 until 2023

Artback NT's Visual Arts Program collaborates with artists, arts workers, and communities throughout the Northern Territory to showcase the unique talents and perspectives of the region, by touring exceptional visual art experiences to remote, regional, and metropolitan galleries, across the country.

For media enquiries, please contact Artback NT Visual Arts Manager Roni Judge:
art@artbacknt.com.au | 08 8953 5941

Clay on Country, ceramics of the central desert is proudly toured by Artback NT with support from the Australian Government's Visions of Australia program.



Image 1: Clay on Country exhibited at Araluen Arts Centre, Mparntwe, July 2022. Photo Joanne Foster. Courtesy Artback NT.