

## MEDIA RELEASE

### Watercolour Exhibition at Albert Namatjira Gallery

A new exhibition featuring the works of Arrernte watercolourists has recently opened at the Araluen Arts Centre in the Alice Springs Cultural Precinct (ASCP).

The exhibition is the result of collaboration between various divisions within the Department of Natural Resources, Environment and The Arts including; Northern Territory Parks and Wildlife Service, the Alice Springs Desert Park and the Araluen Arts Centre.

Araluen Arts Centre Curator Kate Podger said the works feature a wide range of artists, including Albert Namatjira, Rex Battarbee and wildlife illustrator Nicholas Pike.

“Art, culture and the land are inextricably linked in Indigenous culture and forms the basis of the theme of this exhibition,” Ms Podger said.

“Works of major cultural and tourist sites are depicted, from *Heavitree Gap* to *Mount Sonder* and include ancestral stories (*Tnengkarre*) of those sites.

“Images of wildlife and sounds of native birds that are found in these habitats also form part of the exhibition.”

Albert Namatjira is the pioneer of the Aboriginal watercolour movement in the region, painting watercolour landscapes since the early 1930's.

Ms Podger said Namatjira's works laid the foundations and inspired a second wave of Indigenous watercolour artists during the early 1970's.

“This exhibition also draws comparisons between Albert Namatjira and his mentor Rex Battarbee, and includes works from the Ngurratjuta Pmara Ntjarra Aboriginal Corporation Collection and the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory,” Ms Podger said.

“The meticulously executed illustrations by Nicholas Pike that beautifully document the wildlife of the sites are on display to the public for the first time.

“Pike's illustrations were commissioned by Northern Territory Parks and Wildlife Service for a series of interpretative signs to identify wildlife throughout the Alice Springs Desert Park.”

As part of the exhibition a separate gallery will display Papunya paintings from the early 1970's, that show the emergence of the now renowned Western Desert Painting Movement.

These works were selected from the Papunya School Collection, the Alice Springs Town Council Collection and the Araluen Arts Centre Collection.

The exhibition closes Sunday 24 August 2008.

The Alice Springs Cultural Precinct is open from 10am to 4pm on weekdays and 11am to 4pm on weekends.

Ends

**Media Note – For more information contact Kate Podger on 8951 1134**

Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts  
**Anne Marshall 8999 4730 or 0437 915 366**  
[www.nt.gov.au/nreta](http://www.nt.gov.au/nreta)

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