

Media Release:

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Opportunity for Darwin filmmaker

The untold story, *‘Warriors of the North’*, a film that explores the events of WWII in northern Australia from the perspective of the Indigenous people of the north, is set to become a film with Northern Territory filmmaker Dixi Joy Bankier recently selected as one of five filmmakers throughout Australia to participate in *Headlands 2008*, a 10 week intensive documentary development program.

Northern Territory Film Office (NTFO) Director Penelope McDonald said *Headlands*, an initiative of the Australian Film, Television and Radio School (AFTRS), was looking for filmmakers that had strong, ambitious and engaging documentary projects.

“Dixi Joy Bankier is dedicated to exploring the WWII experience in the Northern Territory, and her film, *Warriors of the North*, is about the varieties of experience that WWII brought to Indigenous communities along our northern coast,” Ms McDonald said.

“The films selected address the past, present and future and the filmmakers are both experienced and emerging filmmakers committed to creating documentaries.

“*Headlands* gives these filmmakers the opportunity to develop their documentary projects with expert advice from International and National advisors, as well as feedback from other participants.

“It’s a very exciting opportunity, and the projects developed will be taken to the Australian International Documentary Conference (AIDC) to pitch in 2009.”

Participants undertake an intensive 10-week development period, including an intensive workshop comprising of a one week residential workshop taking place this week in Melbourne from 7 April to 11 April 2008, followed by nine weeks of supported writing time and two final days of marketplace preparation.

Ms Bankier said being selected to attend the *Headlands 2008* workshop was an invaluable opportunity for a Darwin filmmaker, as it will give her the chance to develop advanced skills needed to become a broadcast producer.

“As well as developing new skills, the opportunity to have my project seen by the eyes of the industry is fantastic, and gives my film a better chance of being made,” Ms Bankier said.

“All filming will take place in Aboriginal communities throughout Northern Australia, so while it’s quite a challenging film to make, the story is such an important one to tell as it is an unknown part of Australian wartime history.”

Further detail about the film supplied by Dixi Joy Bankier:

Northern Australia was the frontline during WWII. The warriors of the north were masters of their environment and they became essential to the defence of the nation. Thousands more Aboriginals became vital to the labour force and war effort. This allowed for an unprecedented cross cultural exchange between tribal Aboriginals and tens of thousands of typical Aussie soldiers as they fought and worked alongside the Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders of the north. Whilst the war brought great opportunity to the people of the north with education, employment, wages, housing and healthcare. The war also caused the greatest interruption to culture, tradition and lifestyle since white settlement.

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Media Note – for more information contact Penelope McDonald on 8952 5222

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