

Media Release:

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MAGNT Exhibition Celebrates Marika Family

The Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory (MAGNT), in partnership with the Marika family and the National Museum of Australia, will launch the captivating travelling exhibition *Yalangbara: Art of the Djang'kawu* on Friday, 25 November 2011.

MAGNT Emeritus Curator Margie West says this exhibition tells the remarkable story of the Marika family of Arnhem Land, which includes three generations of artists, cultural diplomats and custodians of one of Australia's most important spiritual sites.

"The family comprises the Rirratjingu clan, one of Australia's most famous dynasties of artists who celebrate Yalangbara in their art and ceremony," said Ms West.

"The story of the Djang'kawu has been the subject of some major Australia artworks, and this compelling exhibition gives us an opportunity to understand more fully the deep and complex relationships between place and people.

"We are very excited to be showing these works in the Territory, as we know that Indigenous art and culture is central to the lives of thousands of Territorians."

Yalangbara, also known as Port Bradshaw, is one of the most significant areas in the Miwatj (Arnhem Land) region, as it is where the Djang'kawu Sisters and their Brother landed and began their world-transforming journey across northeast-central Arnhem Land.

As part of their creative journey, the Djang'kawu gave birth to all the clans of the Dhuwa moiety, including the Rirratjingu, the traditional owners of Yalangbara.

Yalangbara: Art of the Djang'kawu is the first major survey of works by the Marika family, profiling rare and significant works from public and private collections, including the first paintings produced at Yirrkala in the 1930s, unique crayon drawings from the 1950s, and monumental narrative bark paintings, along with contemporary sculptures, bark paintings, fibre items and prints.

The exhibition will be displayed at MAGNT until 15 July 2012.

Ms West and Mawalan 2 Marika will give a floor talk about the exhibition at MAGNT at 12:30pm on Friday, 25 November 2011. Ms West will also present an additional curatorial floor talk at 11am on Saturday, 26 November 2011.

For more information on current and upcoming exhibitions at MAGNT, go to www.nt.gov.au/nreta/museums/index.html.

Ends

Media Note – Media is invited to attend a special performance of the sacred Ngarra ceremony at the official exhibition opening at 5:30pm on Thursday, 24 November 2011 at the Colin Jack-Hinton Maritime Undercroft gallery. For more information, contact Ana Maria McKay on 0427 015 790.

Image – *Djang'kawu Story*, Wandjuk Marika, 1964. Natural pigments on bark, 144.8 x 54.6cm. Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory.

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