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AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINAL ART LECTURE SERIES THANKSGIVING WEEK AT MUSEUM OF INTERNATIONAL FOLK ART

Santa Fe, New Mexico—The Museum of International Folk Art Museum Shop will host an Aboriginal art show and lecture series for the fourth consecutive year, Nov. 26 through Nov. 28.

Andra Archer, a curator, exhibit producer and Australian Aboriginal art expert from Denver, will be giving three lectures/slideshows and two circle talks about the Aboriginal people of Australia and their artwork, Friday, Nov. 26; Saturday, Nov. 27; Sunday, Nov. 28, 1 p.m. and two circle talks Saturday, Nov. 27, and Sunday, Nov. 28 11 a.m.

“Andra has worked at many Aboriginal art centers assisting women with various techniques and processes for painting on canvas,” says Sara Birmingham, Museum of New Mexico Shops Buyer. “She will be showing a wide assortment of paintings that have just recently been completed in the remote Aboriginal communities. When we are lucky presents incredible slide shows and lectures. Her presentations include storytelling that captures the essence of this special place.”

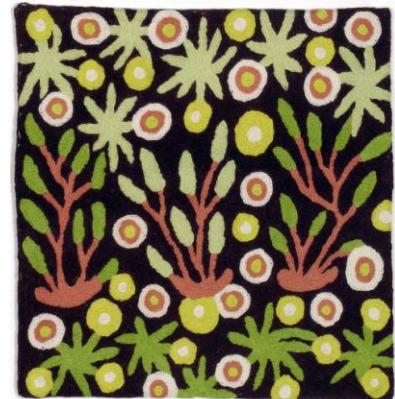
Archer has just returned from six weeks in the Australian Outback working with the women artists who paint many of the original pieces that will be discussed and available for sale. This most recent trip was Archer’s seventh trip to the Central Desert of Australia. The trip takes a full five days from her home in Colorado.

“The artwork people will be seeing at the Museum of International Folk Art reflects the Anangu’s deep connection to the land, and the importance of that connection to their culture and law, and to the stories passed down for centuries that have kept their indigenous culture and way of life alive,” said Archer in a phone interview from Denver. “Each painting tells a story and each story confirms the ancient culture.”

The remote Anangu Pitjantjatjara/Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands are accessible to some and visited by few. This area of Australia is most noted because of its proximity to Ayers Rock, known by the indigenous people as *Uluru*. They are connected throughout time to their land and have struggled to maintain their culture, their identity and their sacred sites since the early 1940s when they were first introduced to Western culture. They come from a long tradition of sand and rock painting, imagery now accessible through their work on canvas.

In recent years, the Kaltjiti Arts Center located on the APY Lands has created a place for women (and some men) to paint and sell their work to the world community. Through these events at the Museum of International Folk Art, Archer and the Museum of New Mexico Shops are focused on the creation and distribution of authentic Aboriginal products.

Along with the original paintings of this Aboriginal group there are also textiles and wood products that have been made using the Aboriginal designs. Although some of the people Archer works with do speak English, and she speaks at least 100 words of their language, they often communicate without using words. There’s a certain dialogue and dynamic that happens between the artists and Archer.



Iwana Ken paints lively landscapes. This image is of trees in the wet season. Although Iwana lives in the desert, the bush is vibrant and alive when the rains come which have supported Anangu on the land for generations.



Longaliki Longaliki,(in wheelchair) with Andra Archer, Women's Council Celebration, Umuwa, APY Lands, northern South Australia, Sept. 2010.

"Archer's presentations, which coincide with Thanksgiving weekend, will celebrate many living artists and their culture halfway around the world from us," says Birmingham. "This is certainly an opportunity to buy beautiful artwork while learning about their unique culture and supporting Indigenous Australians."

Indigenous Aboriginal people represent the oldest continuous living culture on earth, having lived throughout Australia for an estimated 40,000 to 50,000 years. Equally as old are the images preserved in Aboriginal rock art. Today rock art, body art and their original stories drawn in the sand are found on canvas paintings. Painting on canvas was introduced to Aboriginal peoples just 40 years ago by Geoffrey Bardon, who taught school in Papunya, located in the remote lands of the Northern Territory.

Current day Aboriginal artists incorporate their immediate environment and ancestral stories in all their paintings. Colors and subject matter is often indicative of seasons and climate changes, reds, ochres and browns reflecting winter or drier periods, brighter pinks, purples and yellow depicting flowers blooming in spring or after a heavy rain. They also incorporate symbols representing the land, plants, foods, animals, people, and daily activities into their paintings, such as hills, creeks, rock holes, honey ants, kangaroos, shields, and boomerangs.



Uluru (Ayers Rock), Northern Territory, Australia.

WHAT: AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINAL ART SHOW AND LECTURE SERIES

WHERE: Museum of International Folk Art Gift Shop and Auditorium

On Museum Hill, 706 Camino Lejo, off the Old Santa Fe Trail, Santa Fe, New Mexico. Lectures free with museum admission. Free parking.

WHEN:

LECTURES: Friday, Nov. 26; Saturday, Nov. 27; Sunday, Nov. 28, 1 p.m. 45-minute slide show and lecture.

CIRCLE TALKS: Saturday, Nov. 27 and Sunday, Nov. 28, 11 a.m. Informal 20-minute Q&A.

Since 2003, New Mexico Creates has enhanced the livelihoods of over 1,000 artists, artisans and authors through a model of economic self-sufficiency. Over the last seven years, the program has paid directly to the artists and their families of New Mexico over \$6 million. The Museum of New Mexico Foundation Shops through the New Mexico Creates initiative offers these extraordinary beautiful, state and locally made gifts and collectables in its six shops in the following Museums of New Mexico; New Mexico History Museum, Palace of the Governors, New Mexico Museum of Art and the Museum of Indian Arts and Culture and the Museum of International Folk Art as well as two websites: www.newmexicocreates.org and www.worldfolkart.org.

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