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### Warburton Art in China

The latest international blockbuster at the Shanghai Art Museum *Our Land - Our Body: Tu Di - Shen Ti* is the largest exhibition of Australian Aboriginal art to visit China and will continue to tour major cities in 2011. The exhibition features 65 works in painting, video, photography, sound and projection from the Warburton Ranges, one of the remotest places on earth - about halfway between Alice Springs and Kalgoorlie in Western Australia. Gary Proctor is the exhibition organiser and manager of the Warburton Arts Project. [www.tjulyuru.com](http://www.tjulyuru.com)

*Tu Di - Shen Ti* is travelling to six venues - Shanghai Art Museum; Nanjing Museum; Today Art Museum, Beijing; the Xi'An Art Museum; Wuhan Art Museum; Zhejiang Art Museum; Dongguan Guancheng Art Museum, Guangzhou; and more in the pipeline. The profile of Australian Indigenous art and culture in China is minimal, and the interest of the museums in this exhibition is high because of the sense of breaking new ground. The show was one of the key closing events for the Year of Australian Culture in China *Imagine Australia* over April - June 2011.

Gary Proctor has worked for the last two decades with the Ngaanyatjarra people, a desert community that has now grown to about 3,000 people. Most of his time has been spent developing artists' skills and working with elders to gather the ancient stories and songs, which have now become messages to the outside world. None of the works in *Tu Di - Shen Ti* are for sale, and they will remain the property of the Ngaanyatjarra people. The China project has engaged Gary Proctor with a Chinese team, and his wife Zhou Lingling as project manager, for two years, and their efforts have paid off - 85,000 visitors saw the show in Shanghai in March 2011.

Trying to capture a sense of the desert, the vast skies and landscape of the Warburton Ranges area was achieved by placing photographs and audio-visual components, like the sound of the wind, alongside the paintings. There were also recordings of community members and elders speaking and singing. Gary Proctor has had to negotiate secret-sacred issues in which the titles of some works are so sacred that it is forbidden to speak them aloud. He has sought to convey how the work deals with the interconnectedness of all in the spiritual cosmos of the artists.

On its return to Australia in 2013 the exhibition will open at the Art Gallery of Western Australia.

Report compiled with acknowledgements to Din Heagney's The Foreign Art Office, his art writing project funded by the Australia Council, based on travels to China and USA in 2011. See [www.shanghaixpat.com/article/aboriginal-australia-arrives-modern-china-13438.html](http://www.shanghaixpat.com/article/aboriginal-australia-arrives-modern-china-13438.html)



### Western APY Lands 'boutique' art to Europe

Ninuku Arts, Tjungu Playa and Tjala Arts are the source of *Western APY Lands*, a substantial group exhibition showcasing the western APY district that is touring from May to October 2011 to four private art museums and galleries in Germany. These three art centres in South Australia's far north are not unique in their extreme isolation, but being nearly 1,500 km from Adelaide and two days travel from Alice Springs they are certainly amongst the most isolated. German publicity has characterised them as 'boutique' centres in an attempt to convey that they are small but extremely vibrant in their art practice, their management and as proved by this massive international exercise, highly entrepreneurial. *Western APY Lands* is the largest exhibition of Australian Indigenous art ever to be shown in Europe.

Starting at Kunstwerk in Stuttgart from 8 May - 5 June, *Western APY Lands* will be at the organising gallery Kelch Art in Freiburg from 11 June - 9 July moving on to Emmanuel Walderdorff Galerie in Cologne from 16 July to 13 August and the Grassi Museum für Völkerkunde in Leipzig from 16 September - 30 October. Australian Robyn Kelch, director of Kelch Art, a gallery dedicated to exhibiting ethically sourced contemporary Australian Indigenous art, has curated the exhibition. *Western APY Lands* is a component of the exhibition series *Pro Community* organised under the auspices of the Australian Embassy in Berlin and assisted by the Australia Council.

An excellent 40-page catalogue with essays and pages on each artist is available from Kelch Art. <http://www.artkelch.de/downloadbereich-presse.html>  
The art centres will be represented on the tour by artists Keith Stevens and Ginger Wikilyiri from Tjungu Playa; Molly Nampitjin Miller and Yaritji Connolly from Ninuku Arts; and art centre managers Claire Eltringham, Amanda Dent and Brian Hallett.