

MEDIA RELEASE

The beauty of Silk and Art

Eva Wanganeen recently showcased her silk at the Dreamtime Parade, part of the 2012 inaugural Perth Fashion Week.

Eva Wanganeen is a well respected Indigenous artist specialising in painting on silk. Since training with master silk artist Marie France in 1997 she has continued to develop her style and techniques. Over her professional art career she has exhibited in Australia and overseas numerous times, addressed the World Textile Forum in Malaysia on silk painting from an Indigenous perspective and many of her paintings are in private collections.

Of her work, Eva Wanganeen said "I have a real passion for painting on silk, it has such a luxurious texture and delicate beauty. I love the magical way the dye flows on the silk and the way the different free flowing colours interact. The colours are dynamic, vibrant and limitless and with different processes magical effects can be achieved. Silkpainting allows me to express my Aboriginal heritage in a unique way which allows me to apply the icons and stories to fine art pieces that hang on the wall, as a piece of wearable art or homewares".

In 2010/2011 the business was affected by floods that swept across Australia. However, Eva was accepted into the Small Business Advisory Services – National Disaster Assistance (SBAS-NDA) program that was set up to provide support to small businesses directly or indirectly impacted by all the natural disasters that occurred in Australia since October 2010. She now has the opportunity via the Belmont Business Enterprise Centre (Belmont BEC) to receive business assistance 'virtually' through 'My business incubator'. The program delivers support via one-on-one telephone assistance, email, mentoring through web meetings and group training webinars. All services are provided free or low cost, by specialist business advisors and with assistance from industry professionals.

Eva Wanganeen said, "By taking advantage of the SBAS-NDA program I am able to hone my business skills and grow my passion into a sustainable small business. As an Aboriginal artist specialising in painting on silk, I have been on an amazing journey to explore my culture, and I truly love what I do".

To find out more about the SBAS-NDA program or the business advisory services offered by Belmont BEC, log onto www.mybusinessincubator.com.au/register or www.belmontbec.com

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Further information on the Belmont BEC, My business incubator

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About: Eva Wanganeen

My name is Eva Wanganeen, I am an Indigenous Australian and a descendent of the Arrente and Kokatha people on my grandmother Eva Kites' side. My grandmothers father, Billy Kite was one of twins and born near Maccoomba station near Oodnadata in the far north of South Australia. Traditionally because of the harshness of the region, scarce resources and cultural practices only one twin could be carried and fed, so the other had to be left behind, which in this case was my grandmothers father, Billy. He was found by a stockman and raised at Maccoomba station and became a stockman himself. Billys' parents and the other twin traveled north, the other twin was believed to have been sighted many years later at Sante Teresa in central Australia, then a mission. My mother Lena Warriors' father gives me a connection to the Wiringu people near Ceduna.

My fathers' peoples' traditional country is from the River Murray region. His great grandfather James Wanganeen was the first recorded Wanganeen, a traditional man from the river Murray region in S.A. and he was removed and eventually relocated at Poonindie Mission at Pt. Lincoln, later the Wanganeen family was moved to Point Pearce mission. In those days it was common practice to remove the Indigenous people from their traditional land to missions to allow white settlers to take over that land. My father Edwin Wanganeen was born at the Point Pearce mission and married my mother Lena Warrior. I was born at the nearby Wallaroo hospital in 1952 and have three sisters and five brothers.

I spent a lot of time in hospital up till I was a teenager but I was allowed to go home between operations and I have many happy memories at Point Pearce because of my family there.

I met my husband Colin, who is originally from England, when I was seventeen. We were married in 1971 and our daughter Kiah (Aboriginal name meaning beautiful) was born in 1973. It was not until our daughter left home that I began my journey of discovery as an artist. My husband and I now live in the beautiful Daintree Rainforest and Kiah in nearby Cairns.

I feel my life has been blessed since I was born with spina bifida and the doctors told my parents I would never walk nor have children. My wonderful grandfather (Eva Kites second husband), Gilbert, would not believe the doctors and encouraged me to take steps by standing me against a wall and twirling a tobacco tin in front of me so I would move towards it. Eventually I walked. (see the photograph over the page of me standing against the wall and my grandfather in front of me). And of course Colin and I had a beautiful daughter.