

## **NEW MODEL ART FAIR TO SHOW BEST IN QUEENSLAND INDIGENOUS ART**

Cairns will be home in 2009 to Australia's first art fair dedicated to Queensland Indigenous artists. Cairns Indigenous Art Fair (CIAF), 21-23 August, will be a unique opportunity for investors and collectors to buy from both commercial art galleries and Indigenous Art Centres at the same event.

Director Michael Snelling said CIAF will include art work from established and emerging artists and will be a chance for art lovers to enhance their understanding of Queensland's Indigenous arts and cultural history.

"CIAF is different because it will bring together commercial galleries and Indigenous Art Centres in Queensland," Mr Snelling said.

"It will also offer unparalleled access to art work from Queensland's known and emerging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, from the sophisticated and sometimes provocative urban artists of South East Queensland as well as artists from Cape York and the Torres Strait.

"Indigenous artists in, or from, Queensland are producing a rich diversity of powerful work. The bold political statements of urban artists Vernon Ah Kee and Richard Bell and the stunning re-interpretation of traditional art forms explored by Dennis Nona, Craig Koomeeta and Alick Tipoti, has announced Queensland Indigenous art to an international audience and enlarged its understanding of Australian art."

Mr Snelling said CIAF's location in the rainforest setting of Tanks Arts Centre will also make it a special event.

"The art fair, selling exhibition and performance program will be held across the three heritage-listed, WWII concrete oil storage tanks that make up Cairns' unique Tanks Arts Centre," Mr Snelling said.

CIAF is part of the Queensland Government's \$10.7 million Backing Indigenous Arts program to strengthen the Indigenous arts industry in Far North Queensland.

CIAF starts on Thursday 20 August, with the invite-only opening event. Entry to the exhibition, art fair, performance and workshop program is free. To find out more go to [www.ciaf.com.au](http://www.ciaf.com.au)

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