

## MEDIA RELEASE

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## Colour Country: art from Roper River

*Colour Country: art from Roper River* kicks off its national tour on 5 June 2009 at Wagga Wagga Art Gallery. This extraordinary exhibition of Aboriginal art from Arnhem Land will subvert your expectations about Indigenous art. There are no dot paintings or any ochres on bark. Instead the Gallery will be filled with huge paintings, bursting with colour and life, depicting country, 'landscape' and ancestral power through these artists' individual vision.

*Colour Country: art from Roper River* consists of approximately fifty works from artists who painted in the Roper River region of the Northern Territory from 1987. The bulk of the exhibition represents historically significant paintings by major artists such as Ginger Riley Munduwalawala, Djambu Barra Barra, Willie Gudabi, Gertie Huddleston and Amy Jirwulurr Johnson, drawn from private and public collections and from Ngukurr Arts, the artist-run community art centre at Ngukurr, NT.

Paintings from Roper River have only been exhibited together in a major public gallery once before, at the National Gallery of Victoria in 1997. Of the works collected from across Australia for this exhibition, many have not been exhibited at all or are rarely seen. *Colour Country: art from Roper River* offers the opportunity to see how the artists have developed individual innovation and experimentation, within their own distinct styles.

*Colour Country: art from Roper River* launches at Wagga Wagga Art Gallery on June 5 2009, as part of *Mawang (Altogether) – Celebrating Indigenous Culture*, Wagga Wagga City Council's winter festival of events. It will be on show in Wagga Wagga until August 2, followed by a national tour to Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide, the Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra and the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, finishing in July, 2010. A full-colour catalogue, with contributions by Cath Bowdler, Judith Ryan and Nicolas Rothwell, has been produced to accompany the exhibition.

### **Global Opening**

**When:** Friday, 5 June, 6:00-8:00pm

**Where:** Wagga Wagga Art Gallery

**Cost:** Free

**Exhibition Dates:** 5 June – 2 August, 2009

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