



National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) Higher Risk Weather Season (HRWS)

Artist Brief and Artwork Story

Artist Details

Artist Name: LaToya Kennedy
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Kalari Billa means the Lachlan River in Wiradjuri language. The Lachlan River runs through my birthplace, Cowra NSW.

Kalari Art showcases vibrant, modern, contemporary Aboriginal art.

Artist Biography

Yuma/Yaama (hello in Ngunnawal and Wiradjuri)!

My name is LaToya and I'm a proud Ngunnawal and Wiradjuri woman - my grandmother is Ngunnawal from Yass, and my grandfather is Wiradjuri from Cowra, both small country towns Central West NSW. I was born in Cowra, grew up in Canberra and I now reside on beautiful Dharawal Country in Wollongong NSW; my connections extend across Wiradjuri, Ngunnawal and Dharawal Country.

My art represents the strong, continuing connections and unique relationships that I have with my country, land and community, and the respect that I have for my culture and traditions. I get my inspiration from my surroundings, recreating elements of Country and telling stories through symbolic representation. I also draw inspirations from my ancestors who have walked this land before us, and who have managed and maintained this land for tens of thousands of years.

Mandaang guwu (thank you). Yindyamarra (respect),

LaToya Kennedy
Aboriginal Artist
Kalari Art

14 August 2024

I respectfully acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as the Traditional Owners of the Land, Rivers and Seas, and I acknowledge and pay my respects to our Elders past, present and future.

Artwork Story: 'Caring for Country'



My artwork represents the strong connections of community and the guidance of our ancestors who have walked this land before us, who have managed and maintained this land for thousands and thousands of years.

My artwork has been created with a vision of telling a story about National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and the vital role they play in helping communities in times of emergency while preparing Australia for future disasters during the Higher Risk Weather Season (HRWS).

My artwork depicts the strong connections and pathways that NEMA provides around the country and represents relationships, respect, trust and growth between NEMA, First Nations people and non-Indigenous Australians.

The large meeting place represents NEMA. The smaller meeting places linking to NEMA represent the work of States and Territories in providing support to impacted communities.

The wedgetail eagle represents the totem of the local Ngunnawal people. Totem animals hold immense significance in Aboriginal culture as they represent Aboriginal identity, spirituality, kinship, and connection to the land; they serve as guardians, protectors, and guides, offering wisdom, strength, and guidance throughout life.

Weather elements such as lightning, dark clouds, heavy rain, fire and bright rays from the sun have been used to depict the natural disasters that occur.

The waterway represents the rivers, lakes and seas throughout the country with fish as a source of food. The three meeting places around the waterway represent our Ngunnawal ancestors who used the Murrumbidgee pathway when travelling to the mountains and caves for initiation and bogong moth celebrations.

The handprint and animal tracks represent people, culture and country; and the footprints represent us on our journey - keeping song, dance, and culture alive with a spiritual connection to our ancestors and The Dreaming.

My artwork demonstrates connections and unique relationships that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have with the country and land, and respect for our traditions and culture.

I respectfully acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as the Traditional Owners of the Land, Rivers and Seas, and I acknowledge and pay my respects to our Elders past, present and future.