

Exhibition information

Maara Dookerniny – Hands Creating is a heartfelt celebration of three generations of our family's artistic expression, honouring the enduring power of creativity across Noongar/Yamatji traditions. This exhibition weaves painting, photography, sculpture, sound, and mixed media into a living archive of memory, Country, and kinship - showcasing the deep connection between ancestry, culture, and identity.

In our heritage, hands are more than tools - they are extensions of spirit, instruments of care, knowledge, and creation. *Maara Dookerniny - Hands Creating* reflects this legacy: from our Nan's wisdom - rooted in traditional practices - to the nurturing hands of mothers, aunties, and the innovative voice from the perspective of a young man whose work echoes the same reverence. Each piece tells a story of resilience, healing, and cultural renewal - bridging past and present.

Art is not separate from life for us, it's a vessel for storytelling and a testament to survival. Some works echo ancestral techniques, while others, like an immersive sonic landscape, push into contemporary spaces - showing how culture evolves without losing its roots.



Robyn Jean, *Paper Swans*, composite photography, 29.7 x 42 x 4.5 cm. Image courtesy of the artist.

Together, they form a powerful visual and auditory language of strength, love, and continuity.

This collection honours the women who shape our family's creative spirit, their hands weaving generational knowledge into every stroke and sound. It's a dialogue between old and new, where making is remembering, and creation becomes resistance. More than a display, it's an invitation - to witness the stories that course through our bloodlines, breathed into being by hands guided by heart and spirit.

We welcome you to *Maara Dookerniny – Hands Creating*, a space where art is ceremony, where the brilliance of Aboriginal families shines, and where the past speaks to the future with integrity and love. Thank you for joining this journey.



Rockingham Arts Centre
11 Kent Street,
Rockingham

Gallery opening times:

Wednesday – Sunday
10am – 4pm

Contact:

(08) 9527 0734
artscentre@rockingham.wa.gov.au
rockingham.wa.gov.au/exhibitions



rockingham.wa.gov.au



The City of Rockingham values your feedback.

Please scan the QR code to complete a short survey. Thank you.

Acknowledgement of Country

The City of Rockingham acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this land, the Binjareb and Whadjuk Nyoongar peoples and their continuing connection to the land, waters and community. We pay our respects to all members of Aboriginal communities and their cultures, and to Elders past and present.



Maara Dookerniny – Hands Creating

Norma MacDonald, Robyn Jean, Sarah
Kapor, Emily Rose, Wesley Jackson
Wednesday 9 July to Sunday 27 July 2025

Norma MacDonald, *Two Worlds 2*, 2025,
mixed media 50 x 50 x 5 cm. Image courtesy of Robyn Jean.

About the artists



Norma Macdonald

Great-grandmother, artist, elder - Norma is a young heart suffused with an old soul whose rich and prolific history in the art world has made her an international cultural icon.

With her work in over two dozen collections, Norma's practice has been a life-long exploration into the fascinating and tragic history of her Noongar/Yamatji family tree. Utilising natural materials of every type imaginable, she has created a multitude of paintings, sculptures, murals, and installations that are breathtaking to behold, and a joy to explore.

As Norma reaches the twilight of a full and adventurous life, and after authoring and illustrating multiple books she looks to pass her story and wisdom to new generations and worthy torchbearers.

Norma MacDonald.
Image courtesy of Robyn Jean.



Robyn Jean

Grandmother, storyteller, elder - Robyn, a Noongar/Yamatji woman, has spent a lifetime in service to communities great and small, and above all, to her family.

With an Associate Degree in Contemporary Aboriginal Art, Robyn is a serial creative - singer/songwriter, painter, sculptor, author and now, award-winning photographer/videographer, exploring the lineage and soul of her subjects, be they people or auspicious moments in the everyday.

As a mentor and matriarch, Robyn's life has always been oriented toward education and compassionate understanding between cultures and creeds, and now, within the shutterbug domain, she aims to capture the invisible heart of her subject and share it with the world.

Robyn Jean.
Image courtesy of Wesley Jackson.



Sarah Kapor

Musician, wife, creative - Sarah is a Noongar/Yamatji musician born in Naarm (Melbourne) whose hands have milked melodious magic from the strings of a violin for as long as she can remember, painstakingly mastering her craft through tireless effort at the prestigious University of WA.

She is the proud owner of Sarah Beth Violin Music Studio, where - for near on two decades - she has imparted her skills and art to the young and bright, while composing and performing in every capacity imaginable, from the orchestra to solo acts.

Sarah's artistic instruments have historically been strings, and her canvas: the open air, and now she ventures into the new domain of digital soundscapes, where her career as a music professional culminates in lovingly-crafted symphonious journeys for her future audiences.

Sarah Kapor.
Image courtesy of Robyn Jean.



Emily Rose

Mother, visionary, artist - Emily thrives in the dedication to her vocation as a fourth generation, multi-disciplinary creator. Her award-winning work, from oils on canvas to resin on burnt timber, weaving, and ephemeral art, explores themes of memory, natural order, and motherhood.

Emily's art exists at the intersection of tradition and innovation, paying homage to cultural knowledge while expanding the horizons of contemporary indigenous art. Continuing a legacy where hands have woven, painted, and carved stories, Emily's work celebrates her ancestors' resilience.

A leader in both contemporary art and community, and now an emerging curator, Emily strives to create generational change, promote cohesion and conscious action - and make beautiful things - for the benefit of those that lie forever in her heart of hearts, her children.

Emily Rose.
Image courtesy of Chris Rose.



Wesley Jackson

Father, photographer, provider - Wesley has forever been a working class man; quiet, humble, stoic in his persistent efforts to make something great of his life and for the community.

Years ago now, he snapped his first shot with a digital camera, and found a spark of something more than the day-in-day-out toil of a Noongar/Yamatji man - something creative and meaningful that he could truly find pride in.

Since his mentorship with Robyn Jean, Wesley has won multiple awards for his photography, but more importantly, found a strong sense of purpose that goes beyond the simple necessity of providing for his cherished family, and today, spends his every free moment behind a lens, capturing the majesty of the natural landscape and its subjects.

Wesley Jackson.
Image courtesy of Robyn Jean.

Dylan Collard

With deep cultural knowledge and a commitment to language revitalisation, Dylan Collard provided guidance and consultation on the Noongar language used in the exhibition title.

Chris Rose

A warm thanks to Chris, who transformed the artists' intention and feeling into words.

Jude Van Der Merwe

For going above and beyond, for mentoring and guiding Emily through the curation process, a huge thank you.

Case Frames

We gratefully acknowledge Case Frames for their expertise and care in professionally framing the works for this exhibition.

Joe's Printing

A heartfelt thank you to Joe's Printing for their generous support and guidance throughout the preparation of this exhibition.

The Community

To our community—thank you for holding us in story, in spirit, and in strength. Your footsteps echo beside ours, guiding us across generations, keeping culture alive in every mark we make.