

The Mount Bundy Statement, 2013

By the Board of Directors of
the Association of Northern, Kimberley and Arnhem Aboriginal
Artists Aboriginal Corporation (ANKAAA)

We are writing to you from the ANKAAA AGM and Annual Conference at
Mt Bundy Station, Adelaide River.

During this coming together of ANKAAA members from across the four ANKAAA
regions - Arnhem Land, the Kimberley, Tiwi Islands and Katherine/Darwin - we have
been talking about the ongoing importance of Indigenous voices,
governance and leadership.

About to enter it's 27th year, ANKAAA prides itself on its strong tradition of
Indigenous governance and leadership. We have not come to this quickly or recently.
This has happened over a long period of time. We offer strong Indigenous
governance because of all the hard work that has come before.

Indigenous people have their own way of leadership. Leaders are not born - they are
made. Our leaders learn from those who have come before them, and they step up
and lead the way for their families, communities and clans. Strong leadership means
knowing the past and seeing the future. Traditional governance systems have been
handed down to us from way back and these systems come together with
contemporary principles of governance in the work we do at ANKAAA.
We want to make sure they are handed on to our children and grandchildren.

We have learnt how to take hold of our resources. To share our patterns and
designs, stories, rules for respect and tools for communication. With these tools we
take part in the contemporary economy and participate in the wider world.
We have built up our own art industries and created job opportunities for Indigenous
and non-Indigenous people.

Connections across time, country, culture and language are important to us.
Indigenous people have always developed and maintained strong relationships and
connections with each other and they are still going strong today.

We the ANKAAA Board are the elected representative voice - the spokespeople for
Indigenous artists across Northern Australia. We have been elected the right way
and come together regularly across different worlds, languages and cultures to
speak with one voice.

We travel vast distances and make many personal sacrifices to meet face-to-face so
we can share our culture, ideas and knowledge, maintain bonds, work together, plan
future activities and speak up for Indigenous artists. We are the people who have the
authority to speak for the land and its people. We come together for those who
cannot travel and we speak up for those whose voice is not always heard.

Instead of somebody talking for us, we talk for ourselves and we want Governments
to come to us, the ANKAAA Board, directly, and to listen to us.
We invite Governments to communicate with Indigenous artists and talk to us directly.
We will always talk to Governments about our people and our future.