

# VINCENT LINGIARI ART AWARD



## MEDIA RELEASE

9 APRIL 2026

For immediate release

### Fourth Vincent Lingiari Art Award to celebrate 50 years of land rights

**Desart** and the **Central Land Council** are proud to present the prestigious Vincent Lingiari Art Award for the fourth time.

The nationally renowned award honours the legacy of Vincent Lingiari, the Wave Hill Walk-Off and the struggle for land rights.

This year's award will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the passing of the Aboriginal Land Rights Act (NT) 1976 with an exhibition themed *Our Country, Our Culture: 50 Years of Land Rights*. The landmark law saw the establishment of the Northern Territory's two largest land councils and allowed them to claim more than half of the NT back for the traditional landowners.

Since the inaugural Vincent Lingiari Art Award in 2016, Aboriginal artists whose country is in the CLC region have submitted works in a wide range of media. In 2026, the award will offer a \$10,000 major prize to the most outstanding artwork in the exhibition, the CLC Delegates' Choice Award of \$2,000 and the Desart People's Choice Award of \$2,000.

The award exhibition will open 17 August 2026 at the Araluen Arts Centre in Mparntwe (Alice Springs). The winners will be announced on 10 September, during the official opening celebration of the Vincent Lingiari Art Award which will coincide with the official opening of **Desert Mob 2026**.

Desart and the CLC are thrilled to announce Kelli Cole, a Warumungu and Luritja woman from Central Australia, as the curator of the award. Ms Cole has helped shape the presentation of Indigenous art on a national stage, contributing to National Indigenous Art Triennials at the National Gallery of Australia and recently leading the curation of Emily Kam Kngwararray at the Tate Modern. Ms Cole has been engaging with Aboriginal art centres across the CLC region and Desart membership about the award since late last year.

Entries for the award close **Friday 17 April 2026**.

For information about how to enter, artists are encouraged to contact [vlaa@desart.com.au](mailto:vlaa@desart.com.au).



**Quote attributable to CLC Chair, Warren Williams:**

“Our old people have always used their artistic skills to fight for their land. Just look at the Yirrkala Bark Petitions and the Barunga Statement, where they also used ochre to paint up for ceremony. Today we are still using art to make the case for our water rights. I am so proud that Desart are again working with us to put on this award.”

**Quote attributable to Philip Watkins, Chief Executive Officer, Desart:**

“Desart is honoured to again partner with the Central Land Council to present the Vincent Lingiari Art Award and acknowledges the CLC’s distinguished service to our people. Our artists today are the inheritors of the legacy of people like Vincent Lingiari, who fought hard to have our land and other rights recognised. Aboriginal-owned and governed art centres continue to embody the spirit and self-determination of the land rights movement, and we look forward to recognising and celebrating the ancient connection of country and culture through the 2026 Vincent Lingiari Art Award.”

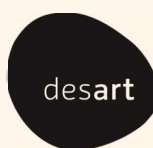
**Quote attributable to Kelli Cole, Curator, Vincent Lingiari Art Award 2026:**

“I’m so excited to be part of the Vincent Lingiari Art Award this year. I look forward to every entry, as each piece represents the enduring power of our culture. Art has always been the way we make ourselves heard, and that will never change.”

Ends.

**MEDIA CONTACTS**

Tamlyn Neck  
Desart Marketing & Communications  
[marketing@desart.com.au](mailto:marketing@desart.com.au)



**Culture First.**  
Supporting Aboriginal  
Art Centres of  
Central Australia

Aileen Keenan  
[media@clc.org.au](mailto:media@clc.org.au)  
0488 984 885



**CENTRAL LAND COUNCIL**

**VINCENT LINGIARI ART AWARD 2026**

Exhibition opens Monday 17 August – Sunday 18 October.

Awards announced Thursday 10 September.

Araluen Arts Cultural Precinct | Mparntwe (Alice Springs), Northern Territory

Images for media use available [HERE](#)

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