

SAN FRANCISCO

# TRIBAL & TEXTILE ART

SHOW / 2018 / ART OF ASIA, AFRICA, OCEANIA & THE AMERICAS

## Australia: Defending the Oceans Ghostnet Art

Shown for the First Time on the West Coast, Contemporary Australian Aboriginal Artworks Come to the San Francisco Tribal & Textile Art Show, February 8-11, 2018



**For Immediate Release, San Francisco —** Never before shown on the West Coast, a captivating exhibition of Australian aboriginal ghostnet sculptures called *Australia: Defending the Oceans* will be on view at the San Francisco Tribal & Textile Show February 8-11, 2018.

The traditional community of Pormpuraaw, located in coastal North Queensland, is confronted with an environmental disaster: abandoned fishing nets, known as *ghostnets*, left by the fishing boats that maraud the Timor and Arafura Seas to the northeast of Australia. These discarded fishing nets wash up on the shore or float in the ocean, entwining and endangering sea life. In an effort to combat this devastating problem, indigenous artists gather

ghostnets and reimagine them as sculptural sea creatures. *The Guardian* writer Clarissa Sebag-Montefiore wrote in a recent article, these artists are “turning death-trap debris into world-class art.”

Beautiful from an aesthetic standpoint, ghostnets are also a means by which indigenous artists can convey the devastating effect that pollution has on human and animal populations. Though this is the first time these extraordinary ghostnets sculptures will be displayed on the West Coast, they have been shown at prestigious locations around the world. In 2016, they were on view at the Oceanographic Museum of Monaco. Later they traveled to the Paris Aquarium; in June of 2017, they were on view in the U.S. for the first time at the United Nations headquarters in New York City as part of The Ocean Conference and World Oceans Day; from there, the works were shown at the University of Virginia, in partnership with the renowned Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection.

(More)

This art form is directly responsible for raising awareness about the harmful effects of ghostnets, and participating artists have started a powerful movement that extends beyond their home communities. According to Pormpuraaw Art & Culture Centre director Paul Jakubowski, “These works are an expression of the artists’ culture and a message to the world telling of their struggle and efforts to preserve what’s always been their’s.” For its debut at the San Francisco Tribal & Textile Art Show, the exhibition of ghostnet sculptures joins another special presentation of indigenous Australian artworks—paintings from the country’s interior; together, they form a unique opportunity to see works rarely shown in the United States.

The exhibition and Ghostnet project is managed by Stéphane Jacob, director of Arts d’Australie, Stéphane Jacob, Paris, France and the project's Senior Curator, in coordination with Suzanne O'Connell of the Suzanne O'Connell Gallery in Brisbane. It is supported by the Ministry for the Arts, Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade, and the Australia Council for the Arts.

The San Francisco Tribal & Textile Art Show opens Thursday, February 8, with a preview opening from 6 to 9 p.m. Regular show hours will be Friday, February 9, 11 am–7 pm; Saturday, February 10, 11 am–7 pm; and Sunday, February 11, 11 am–5 pm. Admission is \$15 per person daily or \$25 for run-of-show. Join us for a week of activities at San Francisco Tribal Art Week. The event kicks off with the San Francisco Tribal & Textile Art Show and concludes with the American Indian Art Show Marin at the Marin Civic Center in San Rafael, California, February 17-18, 2018.

For press photos and additional information go to:  
[sanfranciscotribalandtextileartshow.com/press.php](http://sanfranciscotribalandtextileartshow.com/press.php). For interview requests, please contact Clare Hertel: 505-670-3090, or [clare@clarehertelcommunications.com](mailto:clare@clarehertelcommunications.com)

###