

# Parrtjima – A Festival in Light appoints first Indigenous art curator

The Northern Territory Government is pleased to announce the appointment of Rhoda Roberts AO as curator of the second annual Parrtjima – A Festival in Light event in Alice Springs from Friday, 22 September to Sunday, 1 October 2017.

Roberts has a high-profile nationally and internationally as a respected Indigenous creative director, writer, producer and is a member of the Bundjalung nation, Widjabul clan of Northern New South Wales and South East Queensland. She is Head of First Nations Programming at Sydney Opera House, Festival Director of Boomerang at Bluesfest and was Creative Director of the Vivid Sydney Opera House Sails Projection in 2016.

Roberts will curate the program for the spectacular free public event, which showcases the oldest continuous culture on earth, through the newest technology on a 300-million-year-old natural canvas.

Andrew Hopper, General Manager of Northern Territory Major Events Company, said Roberts will work closely with the Parrtjima Festival Reference Group, AGB Events, local Aboriginal artists and 40 art centres from across the desert region to develop the narrative for the 10-day event that celebrates the magnificent Aboriginal art of Central Australia.

“The Northern Territory Major Events Company is delighted to announce the appointment of Rhoda as the first Indigenous art curator for this unique event, which aims to raise the profile of local Aboriginal artists nationally and in time internationally by sharing their outstanding work and rich culture with the world,” Mr Hopper said. “Rhoda is one of Australia’s most accomplished Aboriginal arts consultants and creative directors. Her extraordinary depth of knowledge, breadth of experience and understanding of the consultative process will be invaluable as we build meaningful connections with local artists to create a breathtaking outdoor exhibition of Aboriginal art.”

Among her achievements, Roberts was Creative Director of the Awakening Segment at the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games Opening Ceremony, Director of Sydney New Year’s Eve (2008-2011), founder and Festival Director of The Dreaming (1994-2009), host of Deadly Sounds national weekly radio program (1992-2014), producer of Aboriginal media company Vibe Australia (1992-2014) and co-founder the Aboriginal National Theater Trust.

Parrtjima curator Rhoda Roberts said: “I’m thrilled to have the new opportunity to develop the program for this extraordinary event, which will connect thousands of visitors to Alice Springs – home of the Arrernte of Mparntwe.

“I have been involved with many communities in the Territory and my family has strong ties with North East Arnhem Land. Under Yolngu way I’m regarded as Gudurrku (brolga) from the Yirritja attached to the Gumatj. I have spent a great deal of time in Alice Springs and Darwin in my years as a journalist and film producer and working on arts events including Garma Festival and Darwin Festival.

“I’m delighted to be returning to Alice Springs for Parrtjima, which will be a magnificent celebration of our central desert artists, who are renowned for their vibrant use of colour. Our artists are vital as they continue to paint country, ensuring the knowledge of yesterday is reimagined for tomorrow.”

The first program announcements will be made mid-year. For more information, please visit [www.ParrtjimaAustralia.com.au](http://www.ParrtjimaAustralia.com.au)

-END- Media contact: Sarah Shields, Access PR, P: 02 9292 7007 | +61 408 283 091 | [sarah@accesspr.com.au](mailto:sarah@accesspr.com.au) Rachael McKenzie, Access PR, P: 02 9292 7011 | +61 433 890 127 | [rachaelm@accesspr.com.au](mailto:rachaelm@accesspr.com.au)

## Contacts

Sarah Shields

02 9292 7007

[mailto: sarah@accesspr.com.au](mailto:sarah@accesspr.com.au)

Rachael McKenzie

02 9292 7011

[mailto: rachaelm@accesspr.com.au](mailto:rachaelm@accesspr.com.au)