CONTENTS

Director's Summary ......................................... 03
2019 Garma Sponsors ........................................ 04
Garma by the Numbers ....................................... 05
Yothu Yindi Foundation .................................... 07
Education Day .................................................. 09
Key Forum Report ............................................ 14
Youth Forum Report .......................................... 23
Cultural Program Highlights .............................. 27
Corporate Report .............................................. 31
Garma Media .................................................... 33

All images contained in this report are © Yothu Yindi Foundation. Thanks to Garma photographers: Peter Eve, Melanie Faith-Dove, Teagan Glenane and Jeanie Govan.

YYF.COM.AU
@YOTHUYINDIFOUND
GARMA2019
GARMA_FESTIVAL_OFFICIAL
THEGARMAFESTIVAL
As I reflect upon the outcomes of this year’s 21st annual Garma Festival, I’m encouraged that the overarching theme strongly resonated with all who attended - the Yolŋu families from the Arnhem Land homelands and communities, and the guests who joined us from interstate and overseas. The Yothu Yindi Foundation has always prided itself on delivering an event that is proactive and forward thinking, but it appears there is a fundamental shift taking place in Indigenous Affairs in this nation which offers us the chance to completely transform the relationship between black and white Australia. As the images in this report show, our youth came to the fore at this year’s Garma, validating the ‘Pathways to Our Future’ theme and YYF’s focus on the next generation and its thinking.

From Michael Yunupingu’s emergence as a young Gumatj leader, to the many children who participated enthusiastically in the bunggul ceremonies, the evidence is clear that our young people are stepping up to the plate and readying themselves to take the reins of leadership. They are telling us that they’ve heard the voices of yesterday’s and today’s leaders, and are ready to build on the foundations and achievements of the past. They know the road in front of them won’t be easy, and they appreciate the scale of the challenges that lie ahead, but they are fierce and determined and have the talent and commitment to move mountains.

It’s with much pride that the Yolŋu elders, the senior men and women, and the mentors note this shift, and with some relief, too, knowing that strong hands are waiting to clasp the Garma message, and carry it forward into the future. Generational change is upon us.

Staging an event of this size in remote northern Australia presents Yothu Yindi Foundation with a number of significant challenges, and we would not be able to overcome these without the generous support of our sponsors and partners.

In a year when the Garma theme urged us to consider ‘Pathways to our future’, your support helps amplify the Garma message to a national audience and build the foundations of a better tomorrow for the next generation of Yolŋu and other Indigenous Australians.

On behalf of all the clan groups of northeast Arnhem Land, and the board of YYF, thank you for your ongoing commitment, and we look forward to working with you in the future as we continue to provide you, our audience with further positive environments upon which to bind our society together.

**Denise Bowden**  
Director of Garma  
Chief Executive Officer | Yothu Yindi Foundation
THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

The Yothu Yindi Foundation would like to acknowledge and thank all of our sponsors who have shared in our vision, and who have contributed greatly to the positive social, cultural and economic impact that Garma delivers annually. We cannot do this without the assistance of our government partners, corporate sponsors and private donors. To our colleagues that work tirelessly behind the scenes to make it all happen, we recognise your commitment and we value your efforts in helping us to deliver Garma in 2019.

Garma welcomes new sponsors every year alongside those who have been with us every step of the way. As Australia’s leading Indigenous cultural exchange event, Garma is a premium and high-profile platform to make meaningful connections with Indigenous Australia.

2019 SPONSORS

Principal Sponsors

Platinum Sponsors

Official Media Partner

Gold Sponsors

Media Supporter

Delivery Partners
## 2019 GARMA BY THE NUMBERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Days &amp; Nights</strong></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attendances</strong></td>
<td>2,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bunggul Dance Troupes</strong></td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Performers</strong></td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Art Centres from Remote North</strong></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expo Stalls</strong></td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yolnu Book Launches</strong></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yolnu Heroes</strong></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Corporate Partners</strong></td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Indigenous Employees</strong></td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fleet Vehicles</strong></td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meals</strong></td>
<td>29,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Garma Volunteers</strong></td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shoutout from Sesame Street’s Big Bird in Yolnu Matha</strong></td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WHERE OUR GUESTS COME FROM

- **22.1%** Northern Territory
- **73.1%** Interstate
- **4.8%** Overseas

GUEST BREAKDOWN BY AGE

- **15 – 17:** 1.9%
- **18 – 24:** 10.4%
- **25 – 34:** 22.6%
- **35 – 44:** 14.2%
- **45 – 54:** 20.8%
- **55 – 64:** 17%
- **65 – 74:** 11.3%
- **75+** : 1.9%

NET PROMOTER SCORE

A Net Promoter Score (NPS) is used to rate a company’s customer service and how likely they would recommend the company to the people they know. An NPS above 50 is considered excellent.

**71**
About the Yothu Yindi Foundation

The Yothu Yindi Foundation was established in 1990 to promote Yolŋu cultural development with community leaders and persons of authority from five regional clan groups:

Gumatj • Rirratjingu • Djapu • Galpu • Wangurri

The leadership and innovative program development of YYF are considered significantly positive forces supporting Indigenous cultural maintenance, not only in Northeast Arnhem Land, but throughout the country and internationally. YYF is a not-for-profit charitable public benevolent institution, with an all-Yolŋu Board of Directors ensuring Yolŋu ownership, drive and direction and future of the Foundation.

Specifically, the Yothu Yindi Foundation’s vision is:

“For Yolŋu and other Indigenous Australians to have the same level of wellbeing and life opportunities and choices as non-Indigenous Australians”

A central principle of Yothu Yindi Foundation’s vision is the creation of economic opportunities for Yolŋu and other Indigenous Australians that can be sustained over the long term – opportunities that will develop through the use of artistic and cultural practices and, importantly, through Yolŋu ownership, drive and direction. Yothu + Yindi = child + mother = balance.

What is it aiming to achieve?

The Yothu Yindi Foundation has identified three primary objectives to drive the achievement of its vision of financially, physically and culturally sustainable Indigenous Australians, each vital for social cohesion, cultural identity, community development and maximised economic development.

These objectives are to:

- provide contemporary environments and programs to practice, preserve, maintain and present traditional knowledge systems, cultural traditions and cultural practices (such as traditional dance (bunggul), song (manikay), art (miny’tji) and ceremony);
- develop economic opportunities for Yolŋu through education, training, employment, enterprise and personal and community development, including community leadership development; and to development, including community leadership development;
- facilitate the sharing of knowledge and culture, thereby fostering a greater understanding between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.
EDUCATION DAY
LOOKING UP TO THE FUTURE

EDUCATION FAIR

Education is at the heart of the Yothu Yindi Foundation’s work, and Garma 2019 began with a day-long Education Fair and Forum, to promote the importance of knowledge-sharing and a love of lifelong learning.

As part of the Education Fair, more than 150 students participated in pop-up classrooms around the bunggul grounds, taking part in a range of activities and workshops that introduced them to Yolŋu culture, and instilled in them the Garma spirit.

With students from schools both near and far, remote and urban, here we see the Yolŋu concept of freshwater and saltwater mixing together, creating an environment that is rich and rewarding.

The day was led by local schools and supported by Charles Darwin University, the NT Department of Education, CSIRO, the NT Music School, and Apple Australia.

The focus on education and the centrality of language was a fitting message for this year, the United Nations International Year of Indigenous Languages.

Yolŋu students of Nhulunbuy Primary School proudly launched their book Nhä Nhunu Nhäŋal? with the Indigenous Literacy Foundation.
EDUCATION FORUM

Guests of the Garma 2019 Education Forum gathered to listen to the many Yolŋu people talk about their experience, heartache and hopes for an education system with a Yolŋu voice at its core.

The Yolŋu people came to share their connections with country, with language, with community. They spoke directly about their long-standing struggles to establish and maintain a strong Yolŋu voice within the Northern Territory’s education system.

The Independent Member for Nhulunbuy, Yingiya Guyula, a former Dhupuma College Student and Yolŋu teacher, said the education system isn’t failing because it wasn’t trying, but because it was failing to bring two cultures together on a genuine pathway to both the Yolŋu and western worlds.

“The only way to do this is to build a school with Yolŋu educators who develop Yolŋu teaching methods side by side with Balanda (western) teaching methods,” he said.

“Our teachers provide the bridge from the known to the unknown, and until the education system fills the schools with Yolŋu who are the bridges who run the schools and work together with Balanda, our children will not succeed.”

A group of local students shared the book they’d spent the past five months writing together, ‘Nha, Nhunu, Nhanal’. Joining Garma from Nhulunbuy Public School, the students wrote the book in Dhangu language.

Let us work constructively together to uphold our distinctive identity as Australians. Our global world wants to make us all the same but our strength is when we see the world through different knowledge systems which works together for all of our benefit.
~ Yalmay Yunupingu
Over the course of the morning, it became abundantly clear that Homelands education was about much more than convenience. It was about survival. Survival of culture, of family, of community. Yolŋu speakers expressed their deep conviction that their children need to learn about Country, On Country. This is their basic human right.

Each speaker spoke with pride, emotion and conviction. At times tears expressed the deep sadness at the loss of homeland educational programs and frustrations with the Northern Territory Department of Education. But there was hope too. Yolŋu teachers talked about their desire for the next generation to be given a chance to build on the homelands foundation they had created 40 years ago.

Across North East Arnhem Land, there are about 36 homeland regions. Some of the homelands have schools in them, yet most do not.

Homelands education was born out of a movement in the 1970’s when Yolŋu elders moved back to their country with a desire to grow their communities, providing healthcare, education and housing. The elders wanted to develop their communities and give children the opportunity to learn both western and Yolŋu worlds—but critically on their homeland with their elders and teachers.

Historically, the homeland education system has produced notable results. Well-known Aboriginal academics and thought leaders came through the much loved but now ceased Dhupuma College of the 1970’s. These leaders created movements and changed government policy at the national level. The Dhupuma experience was a place where Yolŋu people not only learned but became leaders.

There was a consensus among the speakers, including teachers, leaders, elders that their Djamakuli (children) can only truly learn about country, on country. The education system must be brought home. The elders wanted their children to learn where there is peace and quiet and where their family is close by. Above all, they didn't want the Djamakuli (children) to get distracted.

The sentiments were best summed up by one homelands educator, who said: “We are committed to keeping our children strong and homelands families do not want to send their children away. We want them learning on country, where their diets are healthy, where they are not distracted where family is there to care for them.”

It has always been our purpose to learn to be taught, to have an education program developed and delivered. ~ Yananymul Mununggurr
SOLUTIONS MOVING FORWARD

YYF CEO Denise Bowden delivered a frank assessment of the current state of play.

She explained that the system is tripping over itself. Her ‘education medusa’ mapped the impacts of multiple and confusing layers of state and federal education agencies where one agency had no visibility over the other.

Denise was keen to point out that there was a lot of interest and active education programs happening in the region.

“That’s great, it’s healthy it’s fantastic but at times there is too much going on” she said.

Once mapped, the congestion points were clear, undefined overlap between agencies that have a negative impact on the students they were trying to reach.

Denise said they were grateful for their relationship with the Department of Education, but called for a clearly conceptualised and unified approach to education and wrap around health and care services.

The audience also heard about efforts underway to revive Dhupuma College.

Over the past 18 months, YYF has been in partnership with the Northern Territory Department of Education to deliver The Dhupuma Foundational Learning Project.

The program draws on the rich history of the Dhupuma College but is not designed to replicate or replace school. Rather the project is designed to enable those who are disconnected from the traditional educational environment to acquire the skills they need for life. The learning structure is flexible and takes a locally relevant approach.

The program works with young people between the ages of 13-17 who have been “disengaged” or “alienated” from the traditional education system, and teaches them basic literacy and numeracy skills, along with important life-skills and job-readiness training.
The conversation at this year’s Garma coalesced around the theme, ‘Garma’lili manapanmiri dhukarryarrany’dhun gudarr’wu’, which means ‘Pathways to our Future’ in Yolŋu Matha.

And while the Key Forum didn’t officially start until the second morning of the event, the conference kicked off in earnest a day earlier when Gumatj leader and Yothu Yindi Foundation chair Galarrwuy Yunupingu AM used the opening ceremony to issue a blunt message to the Australian Parliament on Constitutional reform.

Telling the audience that ‘enough was enough’, Dr Yunupingu called for a quick resolution to the ongoing public and political debate around the proposals outlined in the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

“We are thinking of our Constitution, how we can change it and make it a real law for Yolŋu people as well as Balanda (non-Indigenous) people,” he said.

“We are doing that, asking for the rights to be accepted by the Commonwealth Government and by everybody else.

“It (the Constitution) really rejects the Yolŋu people.

“We want to make things better so that the law must change, it must change for the Yolŋu people as well as the balanda (non-Indigenous), and they stand together as one people as a law.

“Now we have come to the chance that we want to change some of the laws we (as a nation) are hardly doing that - we are speaking hard but we are doing so little and so is the white people, the government of Australia.”

He then issued an evocative demand: fix the Constitution or we’ll throw it into the sea.

“If they don’t come to us with an answer, we will tell you what we going to do, what the Yolŋu people going to do ... we will dismiss the Constitution ... out of Australia into the saltwater,” he said.

“It will be wonderful. The Yolŋu people will stand on the land and see if that document will float away into the ocean. That’s what is going to happen.”

Dr Yunupingu’s clarion call not only made front-page headlines around the nation, it set the tone for the frank and forthright discussions that would follow over the coming days.
The 21st annual Garma took place at a time of significant upheaval in Indigenous affairs in the nation, against the backdrop of a new Commonwealth Government, and a new Minister for Indigenous Australians in Ken Wyatt, the first Aboriginal MP to hold that position.

As YYF deputy chair Djawa Yunupingu explained in his Keynote speech to the Forum on Saturday morning, Australia had come to a crossroads in its relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, and that was historically a place of worry and stress for Yolŋu people.

But he also articulated the driving force behind Yolŋu resilience in the face of this ongoing uncertainty: the Dhupuma flag, with its logo of a man looking up.

"Dhuwalanydtja Galiku Wangawuy Gulkulawuyngu. This is the flag of Gulkula. This is our vision of Looking up to the future, and it is in our minds and in our souls.

"Not looking down - looking up. Not going back - going forward. Not being weak - being strong.

"Looking up through the stringybark trees, through the honey bees, with the law by our side, to a future that is fair and just and right."

Djawa closed his speech with an emotive plea to Parliament and Australians more broadly: do the hard work to create a future where Indigenous and non-Indigenous are truly equal and balanced.

"Our song-lines are full of celebration for the Macassans from across the water who traded with us for centuries. We honour them in our songs and our dance and they live in our hearts," he said.

"Yolŋu men are named after Macassan heroes – Balupalu, Mangalay, Bapatji - and my sisters take the names of Macassan women: Dela, Daylulu and Bayini, the Guardian of the Gumatj country.

"But there are no white Australians in our song-lines. No Kings or Queens, no Heroes from your world. The things we think about when we think of them are things that hurt us, so we don’t talk about them at all.

"Of course, this is a sad reality. Of course, I want a future where I sing of balance and harmony, equal rights and a fair go. Where we celebrate our shared future.

"I want my children to sing about a Minister and a Leader, or a proud man or woman who stood strong in the street, or in the Parliament, or the Australians who talked quietly to their family and among their friends and said ‘enough standing at the crossroads, let’s sort this out’.

"I want to sing about a Prime Minister, and a Parliament of Heroes, who won the support of the Australian People.

"I want this Garma in my song-lines, remembered as a time when men and women started to really and truly work together at all levels and for everyone. And that it started here, today.

If we did this, what a future that would be to sing about."

If Djawa’s address was a plea for leadership, then the speech by YYF CEO Denise Bowden was almost a cry for help, a culmination of years of frustration at a system which is routinely failing some of the nation’s most marginalised communities.
Accusing Governments of dining out on the misery of Aboriginal people, she said financial maladministration and incompetence were plaguing efforts to remedy remote Indigenous disadvantage.

Citing the example of unsuccessful efforts over many years to have an aged-care facility built in the region, Mrs Bowden said Governments found it much easier to spend money on pet projects in urban areas than they did in the bush.

“Few things focus your mind like grief and anger and over the last decade YYF has analysed spending patterns and formulas through the Commonwealth Grants Commission data, Northern Territory and Federal budget reports & audits,” she said.

“This work confirms everything we see in front of us and explains why many Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory continue to live impoverished lives.

“The data shows time & time again that hundreds of millions of dollars of untied GST funds sent to State & Territory governments to address Aboriginal issues is diverted to other urban priorities, or are spent on administration in Darwin or other urban centres.

“Here’s an example of our frustration. Since 2006 the NT Government has spent over 300 million dollars, presumably from its untied GST payments, creating a Waterfront precinct, which in large part has been turned over to property developers and business.

“In addition to the sunk costs, every year the NT Government grants up to $20M to the Darwin Waterfront Corporation to run a conference centre and tourist facilities including a wave pool and an artificial beach & events like fireworks, concerts and driverless cars.

“‘Forgetting the hundreds of millions in capital costs, that’s an annual payment equivalent to 40 remote houses a year so local Darwinians and people visiting Darwin can enjoy themselves.

“Don’t get me wrong - we understand the importance of tourism to the economy but meanwhile in the bush the housing crisis continues, the housing deficit grows, indigenous people are living lives characterised by poverty and neglect and despair.

“Another child is born to another overcrowded home. Another kid gets no sleep and can’t get to school. Another assault takes place in a house full to bursting point, and so on.

“Recently the NT Government published a report by respected economist John Langalout which confirmed everything we have said for over a decade.

“Mr Langalout found the Territory is in a structural deficit. That is, the books don't balance and this has nothing to do with short-term factors; it's a locked in situation caused by decades of over-spending and maladministration.

“He says that the Territory is in an almost bankrupt situation with forward estimates driving debt so high that by 2030 the interest bill alone will be $2 billion dollars a year.”

Mrs Bowden said the Langalout Report was confronting reading.
“It is the high level of maladministration that is occurring that is the most extraordinary. Let me put some facts on the table:

• 99% of Territory government spending is unscrutinised outside of any internal agency reviews. As a result, almost all expenditure is simply rolled over from one year to another with little external assessment of effectiveness, efficiency and alignment to government priorities.

• There are over 970 different allowances being paid to NT Public Service employees.

• The Territory Government does not have a single integrated management system for agencies capable of budgeting at the cost centre or providing consolidated cashflow information.

• Agencies have adopted a range of in-house solutions, including rudimentary spread-sheet based approaches to prepare manual monthly cash flow reports.

• Over the past two decades the Territory’s government owned corporations have collectively persistently...have operated at a net cost to Territory taxpayers.

“If the Northern Territory Government was a corporation serious thought would have to be given to winding it up. If it was an Aboriginal Corporation its Cabinet ministers would be prosecuted.

“It makes me cry that we are prisoners to this incompetence and maladministration. Yet for all of this there seems no prospect of change.

“Many of us – and I hope many of you too - see the Uluru Statement from the Heart as a light on the hill. A beacon, a flame of hope where for too long there has been none.

“There is no doubt we need a Voice and we will support that with all our heart. But at the same time, we cannot lose sight of the urgent need to change a system that is fundamentally broken, a system that is impoverishing Aboriginal people by clipping the ticket of Aboriginal disadvantage.”

But in the spirit of this year’s theme, the final word belongs to Michael Yunupingu, one of the next generation of young Yolŋu leaders stepping up to the plate, helping to forge strong ‘pathways to the future’.

Michael, who at 21 years is the same age as Garma, urged the audience to embrace the message that they heard over the course of the four days and use it as a force for change when they returned to their own communities and families after the event.

“Twenty-one years ago, the Gulkula site witnessed the birth of Garma, and has developed into a time for shaping policy and developing Indigenous businesses, attracting people from all over the world and uniting all citizens.

“Twenty-one is an age of significance and a symbol of adulthood. Let’s make the 21st Garma the start of a new innovative approach, let’s transform something together powerful, so powerful we can start a movement.”
This year’s Key Forum was sponsored by the University of Melbourne, a reflection of its deepening relationship with the Yothu Yindi Foundation and education in northeast Arnhem Land.

As Vice Chancellor Duncan Maskell explained, the University’s values align closely with those of YYF.

“One of the key values at our university that we share in common with the great ancient cultures of this land is a tradition of respect for and nurturing of knowledge,” he said.

“Like you, we value education as one of the most important things that a society can do for its people. We value education for the great good it can do in people’s lives, and we value the teaching of knowledge in wide and disparate fields.

“We cherish education, and nurture it for the good it can do in every community. We also challenge knowledge through our research and help to build our understanding of the people, places and things that we live with and through.

“So, we come to Garma as leaders and representatives of the University of Melbourne to help advance our work together with you, and to learn from you.

“This work is the work of partnership with the Yothu Yindi Foundation, in the spirit of bala lilli.

“I come as the leader of the University of Melbourne, to reinforce that this partnership is very important to the University, but also to me personally. I come to work with the leaders of the clans in this country.

“Together, we can and we will advance and improve education for your young people, and for young people from other parts of Australia and from other lands.

“All of these students, from every place, have so much they can learn from you, from us, and so importantly from each other.

“The partnership I speak of means two-way knowledge – the traditional knowledge systems of the Balanda university, and the unbroken knowledge traditions of Indigenous people.

“This includes Yolnu Matha and other Aboriginal languages, as well as your culture, your time-honoured practices in living sustainably with the land, your know-how.

“We will be a better university, and our students will receive a better education, if we work in partnership with you, honouring and celebrating and teaching Indigenous knowledge alongside our own knowledge traditions.

“This is a commitment the University of Melbourne is ready to make, every day of the year. We are ready to commit every day of the year with people, dollars and cents, and institutional resources.”
Re-affirming the University’s commitment to the further development of a bush university at Gulkula, in the tradition of the former Dhupuma College, he also announced the establishment of a new Indigenous Knowledge Institute.

“This Institute will be dedicated to becoming a world centre and gathering place for Aboriginal knowledge in all its forms. It will respect and celebrate and, I hope, become a magnet for knowledge of other Indigenous, First Nations people from around the world,” he said.

“Amongst the key aims of the new Institute will be to document, curate, preserve, and disseminate Indigenous knowledge in partnership with Indigenous communities.

“This Institute will build on exciting work already happening involving University researchers and teachers and Indigenous communities across Australia. This includes work in language, arts and music, the life sciences, engineering and design, health, data infrastructure, and a number of twoway learning initiatives.

“To make the Indigenous Knowledge Institute a reality, the University of Melbourne has set aside funds to establish and develop it over the next five years.

“We will launch this initiative to preserve and restore Indigenous knowledge, and support the wider teaching and understanding of cultures which are the oldest on earth, and have too long been neglected, ignored, or forgotten in our universities and society.

“Most importantly for us, I think we have to build our existing partnership between the University of Melbourne and the Yothu Yindi Foundation into something even stronger, even firmer, which can be a powerful beacon and example to the rest of Australia as it becomes more mature as a nation.

“The relationship with the Yothu Yindi Foundation is one that gives both of us – the Yothu Yindi Foundation and the University of Melbourne – a shared future and purpose.

“The Melbourne Indigenous Knowledge Institute is one way we honour the commitment to this relationship. Here in Arnhem Land where Yolŋu Matha is strong, the Institute we’re establishing can do important work, for you, for us, for Australia.

“In time, with other Yothu Yindi Foundation partners including Price Waterhouse Coopers and PwC’s Indigenous consulting, we hope to bring to life the dream of a ‘bush university’, to practice, preserve and maintain Aboriginal knowledge systems, cultural traditions and practices here on Gumatj country in Arnhem Land.

“Again, this is vitally important work, not just for you on this country, not just for us in Melbourne, but for Australia, and the world;”
The presentation of the Yolŋu Heroes Awards has become a high point of the Key Forum agenda, reflecting the esteem in which individuals are held by their communities in northeast Arnhem Land.

This year’s Yolŋu Heroes are the Ganambarr sisters – Banbapuy, Merrkiyawuy, and Ritjilili, who were recognised for their leadership and work, particularly with children and youth. Banbapuy (senior teacher) and Merrkiyawuy (co-principal) are heavily involved with Yirrkala school, while Ritjilili acts as a cultural adviser to non-Indigenous health workers and has run numerous workshops on disease prevention in Yolŋu children.

Continuing the education flavour, and again with the Pathways to our Future theme in mind, Yalmay Yunupingu was also recognised as a Yolŋu Hero this year, in acknowledgement of the outstanding role she has played in Arnhem Land over a long time as an educator and an expert on bilingual and both-ways education.
Banbapuy is a senior teacher at Yirrkala School and as a bi-lingual advocate she is committed to the preservation and maintenance of Yolŋu languages as a vital and non-negotiable aspect of Yolŋu identity.

"If I know what my language is, I know who I am, then I can see others clearly ... Without language I cannot communicate, I cannot talk. I cannot tell you a story. I can't think. I can't cry."

Without her language Banbapuy cannot carry on the Yolŋu tradition of Milkarri, women’s ceremonial crying. Milkarri has been introduced to the cultural tourism program at Bawaka to enhance visitors learning and to deepen their experience of the multi-dimensional nature of Yolŋu knowledge practices including those specific to women.

Banbapuy works closely with her family to develop Bawaka’s overall cultural tourism program. She also uses her knowledge and considerable experience as a cultural ambassador to conduct professional development workshops for teachers at Yirrkala School and elsewhere.

Banbapuy is a familiar face at the Garma Festival where, along with her Yolŋu colleagues she conducts sometimes uncomfortable classes for visitors by employing Yolŋu kinship protocols to educate participants in the discipline of Yolŋu familial relationships. Garma visitors are required to behave towards each other in accordance with the dictates of Yolŋu Rom (Law). The experience is shared between Banbapuy and her Yolŋu associates and the class as a whole with much grace and good humour all round. These qualities are characteristic of Banbabuy’s general cross-cultural relationships.

Merrkiyawuy’s leadership potential was recognised, nurtured and developed through the bilingual education program at Dhupuma College where she received numerous awards for excellence. Many of the students from Dhupuma are now like Merrkiyawuy, community leaders proficient in both English and their own languages.

In recognition of the purity and power of Datiwuy, the language of her identity, in 1994 Merrkiyawuy wrote a detailed exposition of this language for inclusion in the Macquarie Publication ‘Aboriginal Words’. She used knowledge of her own language to explain the connections between NE Arnhem Land’s people, their unique languages and the Yolŋu Rom held in Yolŋu individual Land and Sea Country estates. She continues this mission today.

Merrki has been involved with bi-lingual education in NE Arnhem Land for many years. She is currently Co-Principal of Yirrkala School which has resolutely maintained its bi-lingual status since its inception in 1960. Merrkiyawuy has written six wonderful books for children in both English and the children’s languages.

Along with her sisters she is a co-author of their three books that use Bawaka Homeland to invite non-indigenous people to participate in a Yolŋu cultural learning experience.

Merrkiyawuy is a co-director of ‘Yawulngura’ - a creative bi-lingual performance, incorporating theatre, dance and traditional music. This offers secondary students at the school the opportunity to explore a range of life lessons and traditional knowledge.
Ritjilili is a gentle, compassionate and caring woman who is highly respected for her work with Yolŋu mothers and children. Acting as a cultural advisor to non-indigenous health workers she has run numerous workshops focusing on the prevention of disease especially in Yolŋu children.

In partnership with her sisters Ritjilili is deeply committed to sharing the rich knowledge of her Yolŋu heritage with visitors to Bawaka Homeland where she acts as Caretaker under Yolŋu Rom (Law). She is a co-author of three books about Bawaka and is instrumental in the production of a comprehensive set of Teachers Notes to accompany ‘Welcome to My Country’, a valuable resource which is available to teachers world-wide and now forms part of the new Australian Curriculum.

The latest publication, ‘Song Spirals’ today has been launched at Garma, many congratulations ladies. In association with ‘Song Spirals’ Ritjilili recently sang Milkarri, a very moving women’s crying ceremony, for a group of visitors at Bawaka.

In the early morning on the beach at Bawaka she cried ‘The rays of sun touch everything in our country’. Ritjilili’s warmth touches those around her. Along with other Yolŋu women Ritjilili is instrumental in ensuring this ancestral practice and the knowledge it embodies is nurtured and maintained for future generations.

In sharing her knowledge Ritjilili allows us to experience and hopefully to understand something of the depth, complexity and sheer beauty of Yolŋu knowledge and to appreciate the vital importance of Yolŋu Land and Sea Country estates to Yolŋu well-being.

Yalmay is a member and elder of the Rirratjingu clan. She is one of the Northern Territory’s most celebrated and outstanding educators and is recognized throughout Australia as an expert on bilingual and both-ways education. She continues the work of her beloved late husband Dr M Yunupingu.

She undertook her primary and secondary education at the Yirrkala School, she holds a Diploma of Teaching from the Batchelor Institute and a Bachelor of Education from Charles Darwin University. She is an Honorary Research Fellow at CDU. Over 40 years she has filled just about every role at the Yirrkala Schools. From Assistant teacher, Teacher, Senior Teacher, Teacher Linguist and Principal. She is a foundation member of the Action Group and the Yambirrpa School Council and has served on Education Department and University Committees and Advisory groups too numerous to mention. She has received awards for teaching excellence and citizenship. With her husband, her brother in law, Dr Galarrwuy Yunupingu and her late sister Dr R Marika-Mununggiritj she played a significant role in the establishment of the Yothu Yindi Foundation 29 years ago.

Amid all this Yalmay has reared 6 daughters and has 9 grandchildren and 3 great grandchildren, yet she still finds time, as a member of the highly respected Marika artistic dynasty, to pursue her artistic skills. Following in her father Mathaman’s footsteps, her work is featured in the Museum and Art gallery of the NT, the National Gallery of Australia and the Bayly Art Museum at the University of Virginia.

Yalmay is a Yolŋu hero - loved, admired and respected by her Yolŋu family and her friends and colleagues across Australia.
The Youth Forum is by far the most energetic place to be at Garma. This year 150 Indigenous and non-Indigenous young people from across Australia participated in four days of engaging workshops and cultural activities culminating in a ground-breaking presentation of The Imagination Declaration at the Key Forum that went viral on social media.

The Youth Forum is aimed at building friendships, sharing knowledge across cultures, collaborative problem-solving, critical and creative thinking, as well as developing leadership skills that aim to equip young people with confidence to take their place as leaders of today and the future. The Youth Forum promoted positive learning and well-being of young people in a safe, culturally appropriate and stimulating environment that was developed with careful consideration towards the theme Pathways to our Future.

The Yothu Yindi Foundation worked closely with a dedicated team of partners and facilitators, to ensure that the Garma theme was a common thread weaved throughout the four-day program to ensure maximum educational benefits.

Our partners included:
- AIME - Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience
- Apple Australia
- ABC’s Behind the News
- Alana And Madeline Foundation
- CSIRO
- Miwatj Health Raypirri Rom team
- Northern Territory Music School

Additional workshops from Charles Darwin University in Yolŋu Matha and music workshops with the Spinifex Gum’s Marliya Choir under the mentorship of Emma Donovan and Felix Riebl were major highlights.
To the Prime Minister & Education Ministers across Australia,

In 1967, we asked to be counted.
In 2017, we asked for a voice and treaty.
Today, we ask you to imagine what’s possible.
The future of this country lies in all of our hands.
We do not want to inherit a world that is in pain.
We do not want to stare down huge inequality feeling powerless to our fate.
We do not want to be unarmed as we confront some of the biggest problems faced by the human race, from rising sea levels, which will lead to significant refugee challenges, to droughts and food shortages, and our own challenges around a cycle of perpetuated disadvantaged.

It’s time to think differently.

With 60,000 years of genius and imagination in our hearts and minds, we can be one of the groups of people that transform the future of life on earth, for the good of us all.

We can design the solutions that lift islands up in the face of rising seas, we can work on creative agricultural solutions that are in sync with our natural habitat, we can re-engineer schooling, we can invent new jobs and technologies, and we can unite around kindness.

We are not the problem, we are the solution.
We don’t want to be boxed.
We don’t want ceilings.
We want freedom to be whatever a human mind can dream.
When you think of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander kid, or in fact, any kid, imagine what’s possible.

Don’t define us through the lens of disadvantage or label us as limited.
Test us.
Expect the best of us.
Expect the unexpected.
Expect us to continue carrying the custodianship of imagination, entrepreneurial spirit and genius.
Expect us to be complex.
And then let us spread our wings, and soar higher than ever before.

We call on you and the Education Ministers across the nation to establish an imagination agenda for our Indigenous kids and, in fact, for all Australian children.

We urge you to give us the freedom to write a new story.

We want to show the world Aboriginal genius.
We want to show the nation Aboriginal leadership and imagination.

Over the coming months we’ll be sharing the declaration with thousands of Indigenous kids across our nation and together we’ll stand to say, “set an imagination agenda for our classrooms, remove the limited thinking around our disadvantage, stop looking at us as a problem to fix, set us free to be the solution and give us the stage to light up the world.”

We want the Imagination agenda in every school in the nation, from early childhood learning centres through to our most prominent universities.

To our Prime Minister & Education Ministers, we call on you to meet with us and to work on an imagination plan for our country’s education system, for all of us.

We are not the problem, we are the solution.
Although Garma has grown in recent years into a large-scale event that draws national attention, it remains true to its grassroots beginnings as a community event and a meeting point for the clans and families of northeast Arnhem Land, and a celebration of Yolŋu culture.

The over-riding cultural and artistic mission of the Yothu Yindi Foundation in staging Garma is to provide a contemporary environment for the expression and presentation of traditional Yolŋu knowledge and cultural systems, and share these practices with our guests in an authentic Yolŋu setting.

They key ceremonial and artistic components of the program are ancient story-telling, traditional miny’tji (art), manikay (song), and bunggul (dance), and include the Dilthan Yolŋunha (Women’s Healing) program, which is led by senior Yolŋu women.

These traditions have flourished for tens of thousands of years, and by celebrating them with our guests, Garma not only contributes to a greater cross-cultural understanding between black and white Australia, but helps maintain and preserve them for future generations.

**BUNGGUL**

This colourful nightly performance of traditional Yolŋu song (manikay) and dance (bunggul) continues to be a major drawcard for Garma visitors, and the perfect way to end a busy day.

Here, the 13 clans share a vast treasure trove of cultural knowledge with our guests, imparting stories that were birthed thousands of years ago and passed down from one generation to the next.

This year’s bunggul was notable for the large number of children who took part in each clan’s dances, proof of just how strong cultural bonds remain in the communities of northeast Arnhem Land.

**GAPAN GALLERY**

The spectacular opening of the Gapan Gallery under the stars is an occasion not to be missed, and the artistic component of Garma remains a key element of the event.

YYF is proud to support the local and regional arts centres whose works are featured at Garma, which this year included: Buku Larrnggay; Bula’Bula Arts Aboriginal Corporation; Elcho Island Arts; Gapuwiyak Culture & Arts Aboriginal Corporation; Ngukurr Arts Centre; Top Didj & Art Gallery; and popular local artist Dhambit Mununggurr.

**GARMA CINEMA**

This year’s Garma Cinema had a distinctly local flavour, and some old favourites on the line-up.

Over three nights in the Knowledge Centre, guests were immersed in some wonderful films.

Highlights included the 2001 classic, Yolŋu Boy, the Gurruwiwi’s emotional journey in *Westwind: Djalu’s Legacy*, and the picturesque *Ngukurr Story Project*, along with *Ten Canoes* and *Top End Wedding.*
Arts, crafts & cultural workshops

Opening Ceremony

Gapan gallery

Weaving

Galpu clan bunggul

Spinifex Gum
MUSIC

Each year Garma highlights Arnhem Land musicians, showcasing the depth and talent of the industry. Now in its 21st year Garma has seen a significant growth of Indigenous music across the Northern Territory, this important and bourgeoning scene over recent years has flourished to become a force to be admired. A force which is acknowledged nationally and internationally for its vibrancy and exceptional world class talent. Local highlights this year were Black Rock Band, Barra West Wind and Dhapanbal Yunupingu sharing her message calling for peace and freedom for her people.

Highlights this year included a spine tingling performances from Spinifex Gum and Emma Donovan, and appearing for the first time at Garma the soulful Dan Sultan and the distinct hard rock of Southeast Desert Metal from Alice Springs. Local audiences warmly embraced international First Nation’s artists Tenzin Choeygal (Tibet) and Amandou Suso (South Africa) both sharing their unique culture with audiences and fellow artists.

Music Industry Development

Each year Garma’s music industry development program “Skillshare Workshops” brings local and visiting artists together over the 4-day festival to collaborate, share skills and network. This year the theme “Pathways to our Future” provided inspiration for the skill share sessions to take a moment to pause and reflect what in fact the future could look like for Australia’s Indigenous music scene.

2019 Performers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amadou Suso</th>
<th>Dhapanbal Yunupingu</th>
<th>OKA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bala G</td>
<td>Emma Donovan</td>
<td>Salt Lake Band</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Rock Band</td>
<td>Eric Avery</td>
<td>Southeast Desert Metal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corner Street Band</td>
<td>Garrangali Band</td>
<td>Spinifex Gum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dan Sultan</td>
<td>Jason Durrurrunga</td>
<td>Tenzin Choegyal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deline Brisco</td>
<td>Juran Adams</td>
<td>Yothu Yindi Next Generation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Microwave Jenny</td>
<td>Yirrnga Yunupingu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WOMEN’S CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Women’s Healing

Dilthan Yolgunha, the women’s healing space was a key feature again at Garma. A restricted area for women only where Yolnu women treat festivalgoers through proven traditional healing practices using medicines from the ‘bush pharmacy’, cultural practices and traditions.

Dawn Crying Ceremony

In the pre-dawn quiet of Sunday morning, dozens of female festivalgoers shuffle from their campsites to meet Eunice Yunupingu and her Gumatj sisters: Dorothy Nyapa Nyapa, Dopia Yunupingu Gurruwiwi and Dila Yunupingu Munungurr. The five healers sing in the dawn, crying through song cycles as light breaks over the escarpment.
AROUND THE GARMA GROUNDS
HIGHLIGHTS

Yirralka rangers learning on country

Pandanus weaving

Marine Debris sculpture

Short Back & Side Walks

Salt Lake Band
Engaging Corporate Australia

Garma attracts senior executives from some of Australia’s largest organisations as they merge business networking with cultural immersion. The positive outcomes developed at Garma for our corporate guests continues to grow year-on-year with major opportunities stemming from the event. The focus is on Indigenous business opportunities and economic development with networking and discussion flowing well into the night around the campfire.

Garma’s program has the remarkable ability to transcend colour, creed and race, as structures of hierarchy and status dissolve; from champions of industry, philanthropic leaders, government policy makers to academics from across the nation along with international counterparts, coming together eager to learn from a grass-roots perspective. Our corporate guests recognise how valuable this experience is in our efforts to shape the nation from a place of real connection through open and honest dialogue.

This year the Youth Yindi foundation hosted nearly 40 companies and government agencies with more than 450 participants making 2019 the biggest attendance rate to date.

Some of the organisations that attended Garma in 2019 included; Australian Broadcasting Corporation, Apple Australia, Airnorth, Business Council of Australia, CSIRO, Carbon Creative, Sesame Workshop, Biennale of Sydney, Big River, Charles Darwin University, Dept of Defence Science & Technology, Developing East Arnhem Land, Uniting Care, Ernst & Young, Energy Australia, Gumatj Aboriginal Corporation, Rio Tinto, Seaswift, Sodexo, Sydney Opera House, Westpac, NAB, National Indigenous Australians Agency, NITV, Reconciliation Australia, Northern Territory Police, Origin Energy, PwC, PwC Indigenous Consulting, Woodside Energy, Telstra, University of Melbourne, QLD University of Technology, University of Sydney, Qantas as well as the Australian Government and the Northern Territory Government.

The Garma Corporate Dinner on Saturday evening was overflowing with guests, and featured key note speaker Danny Gilbert AM, Business Council of Australia Board member, who called for all Australian’s and especially our political leaders to navigate a way through the long-standing issue of the rightful recognition of Indigenous people in our nation.
“In my role, I attend many festivals and policy forums, but in my view, few have had the impact on our social and political landscape as Garma”
Krissie Jones Executive GM, Retail, NAB

“It is difficult to articulate the immersive atmosphere and energy present at Garma. There is a pervasive feeling that the interactions unfolding around you are both important and necessary. It is as if you are at the epicentre of a movement that has the power to exert social, economic and political change Australia wide.”
Phoebe Ulrick, Trinity College, University of Melbourne

“I left with renewed sense of responsibility and desire to contribute to a better Australia.”
Nous Principal Emma White

“It was a real privilege to be on the Gumatj land, hearing directly from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from around the country – about their history, culture and the things that matter to them. Coupling formal presentations and panels with cultural experiences like the daily Bunggul made for a really powerful mix.”
Scott McDermott, EnergyAustralia

“Major highlight for me was seeing South East Desert Metal’s set rock the Bunggul - the world’s most remote metal band!”
Adam Mooney, CEO Big River Foundation

“I am inspired to ensure my community preserves our culture and heritage, as it is our identity.”
Elijah John, University of Adelaide
Garma has become an event of major significance on the political calendar, attended by the national media, and representatives from The Australian, ABC, Sky News, The Guardian, NITV, and AAP were at this year’s event, with local media Yolŋu Radio also a key presence.

Although much of the coverage centred around the speeches and discussions at the Key Forum, there were also items that focused on other aspects of Garma, such as the cultural significance of the Gulkula site and the meaning of the bunggul celebrations.

**ABC | Garma Festival begins in Arnhem Land**

**The Guardian | Dining out on Aboriginal misery**

**ABC | Denise Bowden talks Garma**

**ABC | Yolŋu Heroes**

**ABC | Spinifex Gum at Garma**

**ABC | The Ranger who raps**

**ABC | West Wind at Garma**

**The Australian | We’ll throw the constitution into the sea**

**ABC | Decline in NT bilingual teachers**

**News.com.au | Wyatt gauges mps on Indigenous recognition**

**smh.com.au | A voice for Indigenous Australians**

**ABC | Arnhem Land rocket site launch in 2020**

**NT NEWS | Garma draws more than 2600 campers**

**NT NEWS | Constitutional recognition takes centre stage**

**The Australian | Thousands of voices sing in harmony**

**The Australian | Indigenous crisis contacts**

**The Australian | Wyatt wants local truth telling**

**SBS | Political reform on the agenda at Garma Festival**

**9News | Wyatt gauges mps on Indigenous recognition**

**ABC | Garma Festival special**

**TheLeader | Wyatt gauges mps on Indigenous recognition**

**9News | Left behind in closing the gap**

**The Guardian | Indigenous Australians will throw constitution into the sea**

**SBS | Watch Garma on NITV**

**ABC | Anthony Albanese to call for Indigenous constitution recognition**

**ABC | Garma 2019 opening ceremony**

**The West | Left behind in closing the gap**

**The Australian | First step to true Reconciliation**

**The Australian | Only lies can defeat Indigenous voice**

**ABC | Garma Festival**

**9News | Noel Pearson attacks conservative columnists**

**SMH | Indigenous voice to parliament must come first**

**The Conversation | Albanese says voice must be in the constitution**

**SKY News | Mining giants facing Indigenous land rights claim**

**ABC | Gove traditional owner to launch compensation mining claim**

**ABC | Governor General David Hurley at Garma**

**NT News | Tie federal funds to NT projects**

**9News | Yunupingu to sue over Arnhem Land mining**

**SBS | Traditional owners to sue over Arnhem Land mining**

**The Australian | Yunupingu announces plan to sue over mine**

**SMH | Campaign against voice**
DailyMail | Indigenous leader launches native title compensation claim
ABC | Ken Wyatt at Garma
ABC | Linda Burney on constitutional recognition
SBS | Governor General urges haste on Indigenous referendum
NT NEWS | Denise Bowden on NT financial mismanagement
9News | Governments spending attacked at Garma
NT NEWS | Australians need to share our history
SheppNews | NT Governments spending attacked at Garma
ABC | NT treaty commissioners stress importance Indigenous youth
The Australian | Lack of recognition an existential threat to Yolŋu people
The Australian | Formidable trio united on constitutional voice
The Islander Online | Yunupingu flags native title mining claim
Weekly Times Now | Ken Wyatt at Garma says Australians need to share our history
SBS | Act on Indigenous recognition or else constitution should be thrown into the sea
The Guardian | Australia to be sued over mining projects
The Australian | NT native title claim difficult for Morrison Government
Standard | NT Governments spending attacked at Garma
Crikey | US asks Australia to commit against China
The Guardian | Garma Festival highlights in pictures
ABC | Garma baby steals the spotlight
SBS | NT treaty talks laid out Garma
ABC | Constitutional recognition dominates Garma agenda
SBS | Cautious optimism Indigenous voice discussions continue
SBS | Imagination Declaration from Youth Forum at Garma 2019
The Australian | Yolŋu seek Bauxite mining compo
The Australian | Yolŋu yell to the nation
The Guardian | How Garma Festival became the main event for
Indigenous Affairs
The West | Indigenous but not disadvantaged
ABC RADIO | Garma 2019
The Wire | Garma Festival builds momentum for an Indigenous voice to parliament
Crikey | Denise Bowden we are prisoners to NT government incompetence and maladministration
NT NEWS | Bowden slams NT government
NT NEWS | Ken Wyatt apologises to Yingiya Mark Guyula
The Australian | Rational argument not insults will make the case for voice
ABC | Cultural loss payouts likely to cost billions
Crikey | NT government is the worst government financial disaster in Australian history
NT NEWS | Uibo rejects claims she threatened to cut Garma Festival funding
Architecture AU | Revisited Garma cultural knowledge centre
NT NEWS | Ken Wyatts snubbing of Yolŋu mla Yingiya Mark Gyuyla
Ararat Advertiser | Yunupingu tells PM to fix constitution
SBS | Indigenous voice dominates conversation
ABC | Garma Festival emerges as Australias most influential forum
Behind The News | Garma Festival 2019
ABC | The weight of his world
NT NEWS | Yunupingu tells PM to fix constitution
ABC iView | Insiders: Garma 2019
The Monthly | Drawing a line in the sand
The Australian | Lessons of Garma shape the future
Isabella Higgins | How the Yunupingu dynasty turned a family festival into a political platform
NIT | Red dust settles after Garma 2019 and stirs the winds of change
The Australian | Feelgood SMH goes missing
Registrations for 2020 tickets will open online at yyf.com.au on Monday 2 December 2019.