

Bwgcolman Community School

Nanngan Bunarhu Mada

Permission was granted by Manbarra Elders' Council on Palm Island for our artwork's name, Nanngan (pronounced naan-n-gan bunarhu mada), meaning 'girl/woman/female of the land and sea'. We also have permission to use Manbarra traditional names for sand, sea, shells, coral, and black and white cockatoos.

Female students from Years 7-12 participated in the Bwgcolman Community School submission for this year's People Culture and Country Project. Students worked on the project during designated 'Women's Business' time. Drawing inspiration from the land, sea, sky, and bunarhu (sand), in addition to gigari and bargala (black and white cockatoos), the girls foregrounded prominent aspects of Palm Island life and culture.

Concept design was collaborative and authentic, with local gigari and bargala feathers and bundumbu (shells) included

in original designs. The bundumbu featured on the skirt were collected from the beach during Women's Business. These were individually affixed by hand, enhanced by the traditional grass skirt. The feathers in the headdress represent the gigari and bargala that are abundant on the island, with the crowning colours representing the surrounding dhambi (coral) reef.

The shoulder bag was crafted from emerging palm tree fronds, decorated with emu feathers, and affixed using seed pods from two local tree species. Finally, the shoes were fashioned from palm tree bark, decorated with casuarina seeds and discs of soft natural raffia woven using traditional techniques, then finished off with colourful feathers.

Our artwork honours the natural environment and represents the transcendent beauty and the myriad colours of Palm Island and its people.

Nanngan Bunarhu Mada 2023

Mavis BAIRA, Rosemary BARRY, Ardiarnah BLACKMAN, Lisa CANNON (model), Milleah FULFORD-CANNON, Effie GALLIGAN, Vikira KENNEDY, Denise LANGDON, Mersane OUI, Jaylani PALMER, Peyton-Lee PALMER, Piper PALMER, B'Rose POYNTER, Adelpia RICHARDSON, Kalynda THOMPSON, Marjorie THOMPSON, Tottie THOMPSON, Shaqunah WATSON, Mulunji WYLES (MARKS).
Cotton fabric, chiffon, acrylic paint, emu feathers, plain feathers, casuarina seeds, burni burni seeds, pods, glue, raffia, beach shells, palm frond and bark, wool, wooden beads.

