



Communicate through our Strengths

Ailsa Walsh, 2018

Tribal connections - Kullili (Thargomindah QLD), Lardil (Mornington Island QLD), Yuggera (Ipswich QLD)

"Communicate through our Strengths" represents our strengths in Indigenous families. Most of us have suffered or have witnessed family/friends go through mental illness. Our strengths in culture and lore allow us to have a voice in decision making, advocating and guiding our young ones to see a better light other than suicide. In 2018 we can now use technology, which is represented through "Wi-Fi bars" in the middle of the painting. This lets us communicate in ways other than face-to-face when we want to talk to someone. Some of us can feel 'shame' and 'weak' when discussing certain sad subjects. I want to change this through my art." - Ailsa Walsh

This painting was commissioned for Queensland Mental Health Week 2018 to reflect the theme 'value mental health' with a vibrant positive message of connection, values and culture. Ailsa believes the biggest gap we have in mental health is communication. To highlight this the painting centres around a yarning circle, which is a sacred and valued place in Indigenous communities where people go to open up and connect with one another. The tracks leading away from the circle go to campfires where people engage in deeper reflection on the things that support mental wellbeing - connections to body, mind, culture, family and community, spirituality and country.

About the artist

Ailsa Walsh is an Aboriginal Australian Visual Artist. Coming from three tribal regions in Queensland she feels she can connect through art using a range of art styles. She started painting at the age of five and was taught in the early years by her late uncle, Ipswich Indigenous Elder, Joseph Davidson. Ailsa would watch as her uncle created amazing x-ray art (Aboriginal painting technique) and eagerly listened as he told her the dream-time stories behind his work. During her twenties Ailsa attended the Aboriginal Centre for the Performing Arts gaining a Diploma in Performing Arts majoring in Acting. After several years of working travel Ailsa rediscovered her love of art and started to paint again. She is studying a Bachelor of Contemporary Australian Indigenous Art at Griffith University, which is the only course in the world that provides training for contemporary Indigenous (Australian) artists. Ailsa is proud of her Aboriginal heritage and is passionate about using her art to tell stories with a connection to culture. Her work encompasses many different art styles from painting to film making.

For more information visit
www.ailsawalsh.com and www.wulkurakadesigns.com