



Stained Glass Window

The painting by Wenten Rubuntja

Interpreted by Jenny Green

The magnificent stained glass windows in the Main Foyer are a major feature of the Araluen Arts Centre. The window was designed by local Aboriginal artist Wenten Rubuntja and is based on a painting called “Arrernte Country”, 1987, acrylic on canvas board, 121 x 90 cm.

This painting is about Mparntwe, relating traditional ancestral stories for the centre of Alice Springs. They belong to the Arrernte (Aranda) people and connect with other stories belonging to Aboriginal people all over the country.

The window is like a large map of Arrernte (Aranda) country around Alice Springs of which all Arrernte (Aranda) people are a part.

It contains three separate, yet interrelated stories:

1. The three panels across the top depict the story of three larrikins.
(left) artwe atnyentye (a moon man)
(centre) artwe yerrampe (a honey ant man)
(right) artwe arnetherke (a carpet snake man)

They are irresistibly attracted to the yerrampe (honey ant) woman at the base. They paint themselves and sing special songs with their pirlpe (music sticks) and totemic animals to help them, but all in vain, as her sacred powers are far superior to theirs. She threatens to sing to them and make them sick if they persist. The action takes place between Papunya and Alyape (Supplejack Dam, represented here by the large circles where the participants are sitting).

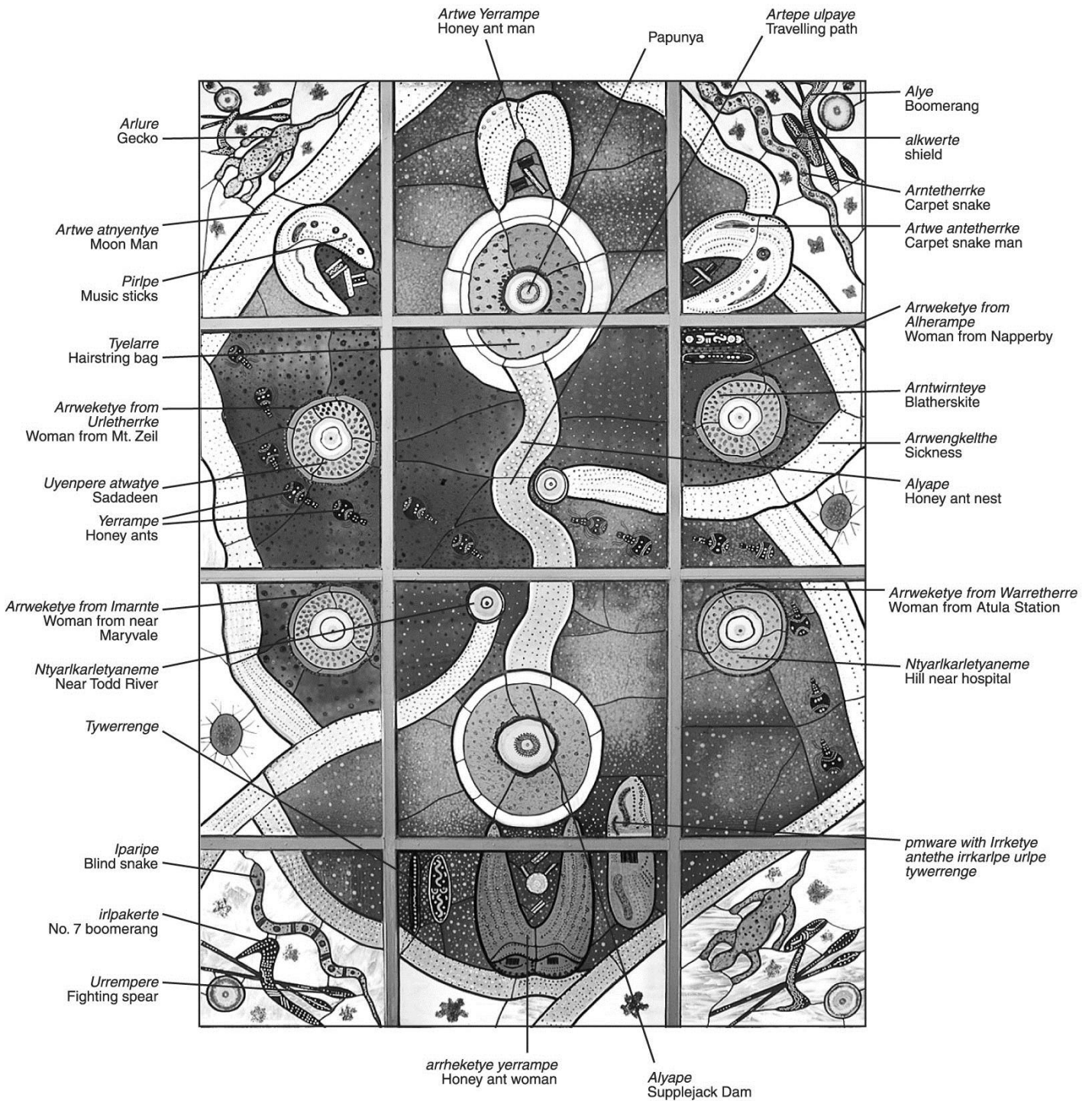
2. All around the red country are the white dotted tracks of the yerrampe (honey ants) as they move from Papunya to Alyape to their nests. These journeys are also shown on the accompanying map. Alyape is the word for both honey ant nest and Supplejack Dam. The honey ants, painted black, are travelling to their nests and are meeting with each other in the centre.
3. From the left, two Yeperenye (caterpillar) women come from Uyenpere atwatye (Sadadeen) and Ntyarlkarletyaneme (near the Todd River) to the centre. The two others come from the right, from Arntwirnteye (Mt Blatherskite) and Ntyarlkarletyaneme (near the hospital). These journeys originate further out at Urletherrke (Mt Zeil), Imarnte (near Maryvale), Alherampe (Napperby) and Warretharre (Atula Station).

In the four corners, on ceremonial grounds of feathers are depicted the totemic animals – arlure (gecko), arntetherke (carpet snake) and iparipe (blind snake) and traditional weapons – irlpakerte (no. 7 boomerang), urremperere (fighting spear), alye (boomerang) and alkwerte (shield).

The smaller stained glass windows were designed and made by students of Yirara College, a local secondary school for Aboriginal students.



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Made by: Alice Inkamala, Julie Ebatarinja, Sally Rubuntja & Bernice Kennedy.
Under the direction of Cedar Prest, Glass Artist