Fostering Australia-Indonesia Friendships with art

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Six of Indonesia’s top artists are in Darwin to sketch, paint and learn about the Northern Territory’s unique art scene, on a cultural exchange with Aboriginal artists from around the Territory.

Asian Engagement and Trade Minister Peter Styles said the artists are taking part in a Northern Territory Government funded artists camp aimed at strengthening cultural ties and friendships with Indonesia.

“The Country Liberals Government is happy to support this cultural exchange between Aboriginal and Indonesian artists with an $85,000 grant spread over two years through the Department of Asian Engagement and Trade,” Mr Styles said.

“It is so great to see the artwork that is coming from their trip so far. The Indonesian artists have been sketching at Charles Darwin National Park, painting the sunset at East Point and Fannie Bay and it is just the beginning of their month long artist camp.

“By living in aboriginal communities, Australian and Indonesian artwork and culture can be interpreted and new landscapes in the business and art world will begin to form.

“The annual artists’ camp will alternate between the Northern Territory and Bali, culminating in a major exhibition at a key national institution showcasing this largely wild part of northern Australia. An exhibition of the artists’ work will also be held in Darwin in September.”

Artists displayed their work to Minister Peter Styles today at the Northern Territory Centre for Contemporary Art in Parap and will continue their journey by living with local communities in Oenpelli, Alice Springs, Munupi and Beswick.

Northern Centre for Contemporary Arts board member and founder of the Made Budhiana gallery in Ubud in Bali, Colin MacDonald said he was delighted the Territory Government is backing the Artists Camp.

“Like sport, art and culture is a great way to strengthen the bonds of friendship between neighbouring countries and I applaud the Country Liberals Government for recognising that,” Mr MacDonald said.
“The Northern Territory Government, the Indonesian Foreign Ministry, Commonwealth Bank Indonesia and the Australia Indonesia Institute and have been working together to bring this together.

“Painting and exchanging ideas, techniques and aesthetics and looking at the similarities in how they picture and represent the world symbolically, will nurture relationships between Indonesian and Aboriginal artists rich in culture.

“These artists will be living in Kakadu National Park and other parts of the region with Aboriginal Territorians, to create a body of work on canvas and paper to expand the collections of the museums and galleries in the Northern Territory.”

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