Spectacular Indigenous light festival to launch in Alice Springs

18 May 2016

A spectacular new event showcasing contemporary and traditional indigenous art will light up Alice Springs from 23 September – 2 October 2016.

Parrtyeme – a Festival in Light will be the first authentic Indigenous light festival of its kind in the world. It will feature Australia’s biggest-ever light show installation, with more than 2.5 kilometres of the MacDonnell Ranges lighting up as part of the event.

Chief Minister and Tourism Minister Adam Giles said the Northern Territory Government have been working with AGB Events, creators of the award-winning Vivid Sydney, in close collaboration with Indigenous artists.

“The focus of the event is helping to share art, culture and stories from the Indigenous community,” Mr Giles said.

“Parrtyeme will be a breathtaking light display that will present the oldest continuous culture on earth through the newest technology on a 300-million-year-old natural canvas.

“Created in close collaboration with local Indigenous artists, Parrtyeme will not only be a breathtaking event for the people of Alice Springs and the Territory, but also visitors from around Australia and the world who are looking for a truly authentic and contemporary Indigenous experience.”

“The festival will feature three separate, distinctive installations of original, authentic Indigenous art created by local artists, students and the community using light and sound.”

The inaugural annual event takes its name from the Arrernte word “Parrtma”, meaning “light up” or “lighting up”.

One featured installation will be a series of large illuminated 1950s-style circle skirts featuring the watercolour artwork of Lenie Namatjira, granddaughter of famous Hermannsburg Western Arrernte artist, Albert Namatjira.

Iris Bendor, Coordinator of Ngurratjuta Iltja Ntjarra – Many Hands, an Aboriginal-owned and managed art centre said: “Parrtyeme is a terrific celebration of local culture, allowing the artistic
community in Alice Springs to share their art and traditional Indigenous stories in a new way for the world to see.”

Mr Giles said the Country Liberals Government was working hard to develop a confident culture that celebrated the Territory’s outdoor lifestyle with world class events, festivals and arts.

“We are committed to expanding the range of tourism experiences and festivals on offer in the Northern Territory,” he said.

“This will be a magnificent celebration of Indigenous culture and is sure to become a popular fixture in the NT events calendar.”

Parrtyeme will take place at the Alice Springs Desert Park.

For more information, please visit www.ParrtyemeAustralia.com.au.

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