



fashion

Cultural Inspiration

Indigenous designers across Australia are combining their design expertise with their art and textiles to make their mark in the fashion industry. Through the development of fashion, textiles, leather and accessories, many Indigenous designers are demonstrating and showcasing their culture, as art and design are inextricably linked as a window into culture and the designers traditional lands.

Indigenous designers often express their culture in a range of mediums including textiles, art and through fashion. Many utilise natural fibres, including cotton and silk, and use traditional methods of surface decoration, such as batik and screen-printing.

There has been an explosion of interest in Indigenous designers, both within Australia and abroad. And many designers are developing their business skills to better meet the demands of the fast paced business world of today.

Two designers currently embarking on the journey from small start-up to growing their small businesses are Buli-J by designer Mick Jauncey, and Eva Wanganeen.

Eva Wanganeen

Nestled at the edge of the magnificent Daintree Rainforest near Cairns, Australian Indigenous silk artist and designer Eva Wanganeen produces limited edition silk scarves, garments and home-ware for high-end boutiques.

Being an Aboriginal artist specialising in painting on pure silk has led her on a journey exploring the culture of the Arrente, Wirringu and Kokatha people from whom she is descended. When Eva herself was born she had spina bifida, and doctors told her parents that she would never walk nor have children.

She began silk painting over twelve years ago under the guidance of French silk artist, Marie France. She has been selected to attend many high profile workshops, displays and shows in Australia and around the world, and has also received invitations to work with Indian, West Malaysian and American artists. As a respected and proud Indigenous artist and designer, Eva is now establishing her brand worldwide.

Mick Jauncey, Buli-J

For Buli-J designer, Mick Jauncey, the impetus for his designs is seeing Aboriginal and Western styles colliding. Buli-J focuses on being able to provide modern Australian streetwear with an Indigenous flavour. The contemporary Indigenous designs are created around three key elements: History - Culture - Harmony

Mick believes that fashion and art are vehicles for social commentary. Buli-J gear provides a positive and light-hearted way in which all people can identify with and embrace a multicultural way of living, one that accepts the past while moving into a future that respects and is proud of Aboriginal Australia.

Business-wise, Mick's new challenge is to now tap into more established and mature markets. His business is fully operating and Buli-J can be purchased online. Mick says, "I'm really excited about the next few years as Buli-J advances from its infancy to the next phase. I'm up for the challenge - bring it on! "



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