

# biennale of sydney

Wendy Hubert

*Yindjibarndi Nyinyart at Wendy's Garden, 2025-2026*

mixed media

Courtesy of the artist and Juluwarlu Art Group

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## Education Resource (7-12)



*Yindjibarndi Nyinyart at Wendy's Garden, 2025-2026;*

mixed media. Installation view in Rememory: 25<sup>th</sup> Biennale of Sydney at Lewers: Penrith Regional Gallery, 2026. Courtesy of the artist and Juluwarlu Art Group. Photography: Maja Baska





*Yindjibarndi Nyinyart at Wendy's Garden, 2025-2026;*  
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## Overview

Wendy Hubert is a respected Yindjibarndi Elder, Cultural Custodian, and artist based in Roebourne, Western Australia. For over 40 years, she has dedicated herself to her community and Country. Her large-scale garden installation celebrates ancestral knowledge through natural materials from Yindjibarndi Country and living native plants used for food, medicine, and ceremony.

Wendy's deep personal connection to Yindjibarndi and Guruma lands drives the work. In her words, "I know my Ngurra. I know it's Laws. I am a Yindjibarndi Custodian, old now, but strong in my thinking and my life". The garden becomes an act of remembering, preserving cultural stories and knowledge of the land.

Materials for this installation were carried from the Pilbara in Western Australia to Sydney, offering visitors a rare opportunity to experience Yindjibarndi Country within an urban gallery context- on the opposite side of the continent. The work transmits intergenerational knowledge while addressing ecological loss caused by colonisation and mining. It challenges extractive relationships to land by centering Indigenous



# biennale of sydney

stewardship, and positions First Nations knowledge systems as essential to environmental futures.

The installation includes an exhibition of Wendy's paintings and video created on Yindijbarndi in the Pilbara. It also documents the journey of members from the Juluwaru Art Group and Yindijbarndi Rangers carrying materials for the installation from Western Australia to Penrith. Wendy's work operates simultaneously as art, activism, education, and ecological repair, shifting audiences from passive viewers to active participants in knowledge transmission and caring for Country.



Wendy Hubert  
Photograph: Claire Martin.  
Courtesy of the artist and Juluwarlu.



# biennale of sydney

## Discussion Questions

Traditional art refers to artistic practices that have been handed down through generations within a particular culture or society. While traditional art often seeks permanence, Wendy Hubert celebrates her ancestral botanical knowledge in her artwork by using natural materials and living plants in a temporary installation.

- How does the **meaning** of the artwork **change** when the **material** (the plants and forms made of sand and earth) is **temporal**?
- How do the different elements (painting, sound, sculpture and installation of natural materials) work together to **communicate meaning**?

Wendy's work challenges extractive relationships, that is, the idea that land is just a resource to be mined or used. By positioning First Nations knowledge as a technology for the future, Wendy shifts the role of the artist from a maker of objects to a healer of ecosystems.

- Can a garden be a form of **protest**? How does the act of **recreating a sacred site** serve as a **statement** against **extractive** companies that may have damaged or cleared that land?
- Wendy calls herself a "**Cultural Custodian**" rather than just an "**Artist**." In the context of the **climate crisis**, should artists stop being creators of new things and start being custodians of what we already have?

## Practical Activities

### *Activity 1*

Choose one specific plant in the installation that looks like it has a distinct personality or character to you, perhaps one that is leaning, twisting, or flowering. Spend the first few minutes just looking at it without drawing, noticing how it creates a unique shape against the air.

Draw the plant in the centre of your page, but instead of trying to be scientifically perfect, focus on capturing its movement and energy. Look closely for any scars on the plant, such as a broken stem, a brown leaf, or a bite mark, and draw these details with heavier pencil pressure to emphasize them.

Write a short title underneath your drawing that describes the mood of this plant, treating it as a portrait of a living being rather than a still life object.



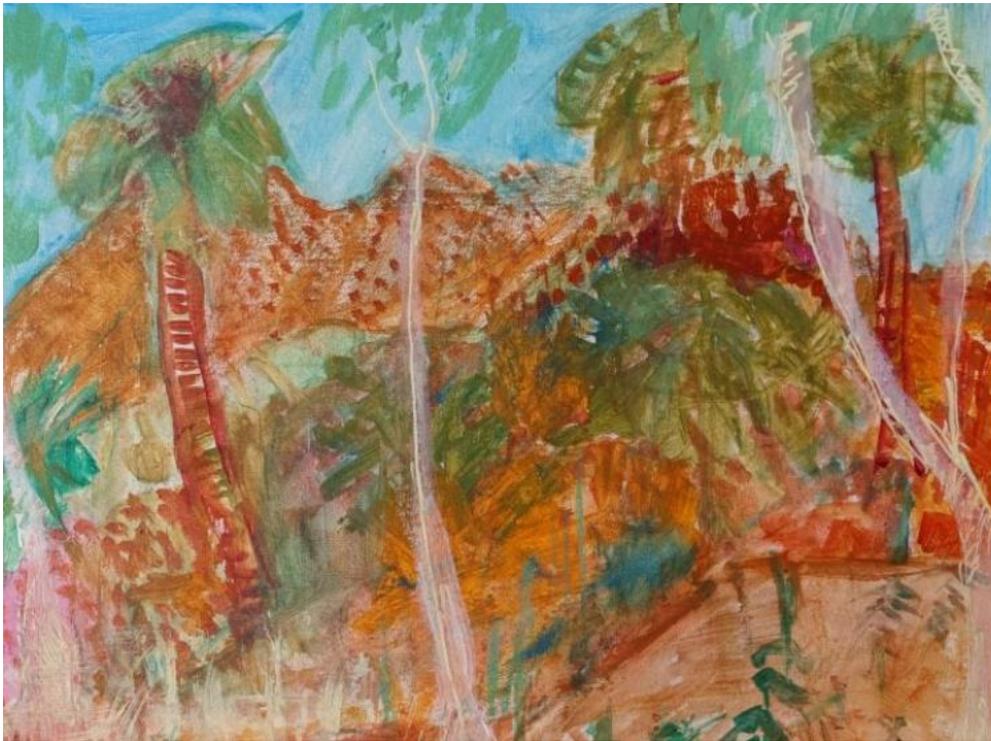
# biennale of sydney

## Activity 2

Select a view where you can see both the organic shapes of the natural materials of the installation and the straight, hard lines of the gallery architecture, such as windows, pillars or slope of the roof. Split your drawing style into two distinct techniques to show this contrast.

Use soft, loose, and shading-heavy marks to draw the natural elements, representing the natural and the living. Use a ruler or very straight, hard lines to draw the gallery background, representing the man-made and the institutional.

Your final drawing should clearly show the tension (or harmony?) between these living ancestors and the built environment.



*Palm on the country, 2025,*  
Photograph: courtesy of the artist and Julwarlu.



# biennale of sydney



*Yindjibarndi Straight Line People, 2024*  
Photograph: courtesy of the artist and Julwarlu.

