

NAISDA plans year of celebration

Therese Murray

IT'S showtime at the National Aboriginal and Islander Skills Development Association (NAISDA) at Kariong which is preparing for its biggest year yet as it celebrates its 40th birthday.

NAISDA has played a key role in the education and training of young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dancers and performing artists since its creation by founder Carole Johnson.

With its creation came a new dance form in Australia, contemporary indigenous dance, a fusion of traditional cultural dance and contemporary dance forms which grew out of collaborations between NAISDA, traditional cultural owners and western trained choreographers.

For its first 30 years NAISDA was based in temporary locations in Sydney.

In 2007 a major change occurred when the college moved to Mount Penang Parklands at Kariong where it became a residential college with world-class facilities.

Since 1976, the organisation has produced thousands of students who have contributed to teaching, mentoring and performing all over Australia and the world.

The college will be celebrating its 40-year milestone with a series of events throughout 2016, including a community open day in May, its midyear production at Wyong's new venue The Art House from June



22-27 and its end of year production from November 21-29.

NAISDA chief executive officer Kim Walker said 2016 was going to be very exciting.

"It is an opportunity for NAISDA to not only reflect on the past four decades, but also look forward to breaking new ground, with innovative new developments to the curriculum set to take place in 2017," she said.

The college will also be partnering with Carriageworks in Sydney to present Circle of Cultures, a reflection of its rich history to date and statement of intention for the future of contemporary indigenous dance. While Circle of Cultures will be a series of events throughout 2016, its focus will be over 16 days from November 5-19 encompassing an Australian indigenous arts symposium and photography and memorabilia exhibition.



Above and right: NAISDA's 2015 end of year production was a true spectacular.

Support developing artists to travel the country

NAISDA is appealing for Central Coast families to participate in its Homestay Program.

Several developing artists are still seeking suitable accommodation as they prepare to launch

their studies at NAISDA this year.

General manager Debra Schlegel is calling for Central Coast families to support the program, which includes a support payment plan that covers stu-

dents' at-home costs. "The majority of our developing artists travel from remote communities around Australia to attend NAISDA, so the Homestay Program is crucial to helping them

undertake their studies and work towards their goals," she said.

For more information contact NAISDA on 4340 3100 or email Sue Gosson s.gosson@naisda.com.au.