



MEDIA RELEASE

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Garden of significance open for all to enjoy

A new Indigenous Interpretative Garden next to the Central Goldfields Art Gallery officially opened yesterday (22/08) for all to enjoy.

Designed collaboratively with Dja Dja Wurrung community representatives and artists supported by Dja Dja Wurrung Enterprise DJANDAK, the Garden features artworks and plantings that are significant to Djaara (Dja Dja Wurrung people).

Jointly funded by the Victorian Government and Council, the garden is a public space inviting the whole community to come together in a spirit of reconciliation to understand and celebrate Dja Dja Wurrung Culture.

The Garden's name was also officially unveiled, garingilang gatjin wii, meaning water and fire garden in Dja Dja Wurrung language.

Dja Dja Wurrung Elders and artists have shared their knowledge and story, reflecting on the natural elements of water and fire on Djaara Country in an inspiring way.

The story and significance behind the garden's theme of water and fire has been brought to life in exciting and creative ways.

The Garden features culturally significant design elements, including rockwells and grinding grooves traditionally used for ochre-, axe- and spear-grinding. Elders Aunty Marilynne Nicholls and Uncle Rick Nelson designed these elements and guided the DJANDAK team on all aspects of these cultural stones.

Other features include a seat with an etched artwork-covered timber top created by artist Michael Bourke, and a Yarning Circle with a firepit feature plaque and trench grate with a flowing water design created by Bendigo-born and proud Djaara woman and artist Sharlee Dunolly-Lee.

A palisade fence, pathways and plantings also complement the Garden's design.

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Steve Dimopoulos said the garden was a fantastic opportunity to share the story of the Dja Dja Wurrung people with Goldfields locals and people visiting the town.

"We are very proud to support a project like this, which aligns with our Experience Victoria 2033 strategy by promoting First Peoples led experiences and creating lasting economic benefits to the area by attracting more visitors."

Central Goldfields Shire Mayor Cr Liesbeth Long said it was exciting to see this significant project for the Shire, on Dja Dja Wurrung Country.

“Over the past few months, it’s been fantastic watching all the elements come together.

“The highlight for me has been the ongoing positive partnership between Council and DJAARA. The principle of listening and working together with the Traditional Owners of the land we are on has been at the heart of this project every step of the way.

“The name is significant because language and words are an important part of raising awareness of Djaara and places.

“We look forward to seeing the Garden become a welcoming space for our local community and visitors to our Shire to come and reflect, learn and share culture as part of an active and engaged approach to reconciliation.”

“Through this collaboration, Dja Dja Wurrung People are sharing culture with the broader community,” said Dja Dja Wurrung Group CEO Rodney Carter.

“Practising Culture is healing for Dja Dja Wurrung People, and creating this space will help the healing of Country while providing a beautiful natural space that benefits all communities.”

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For more information and interviews contact

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