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MEDIA RELEASE: Esperance Nyungar Puppet Project

Date: 09 /11 /2016

Esperance Community Arts is very pleased to announce that we have secured funding through Community Arts Network WA's Catalyst fund to undertake a large-scale puppet project with well-known puppeteer and community arts practitioner Karen Hethey.

Hethey worked with the Esperance community 10 years ago on the 'Fantisea' project - an Esperance Theatre Guild production developed and performed for the 2007 Festival of the Wind. This project ran over many months and engaged many people, resulting in a fantastic community performance. Some of these enormous puppets can still be seen hanging up in the Mini-Golf centre near the old Skate Park.

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/spiritsdancing/sets/72157594556685724/>

<https://www.thebijoutheatre.org.au/index.php/history/previous-shows/73-fantisea-march-2007>

From January to March in 2017 Hethey will work with Esperance community members to create new puppets that will be used to tell the Nyungar story of the eagles and the two boys who stole their eggs and were dropped in the sea, creating two islands off Cape Le Grand.

Traditional Owner and Nyungar artist, Jennell Reynolds will work closely with Hethey to plan the project. Hethey is also working with Nyungar elder Gail Yorkshire –Selby, who published this creation story in Nyungar and English as a children's book in 2011. The story, titled Ngalang Wongi Ngalang Boodja belongs to the Wudjari and Ngatju clans

Hethey will work with community members to build giant puppets for three weeks during the January school holidays. She will return to Esperance for two weeks leading up to the 2017 Festival of the Wind, to choreograph a community performance that will be part of the opening event.

The Esperance Nyungar Puppet Project is open to all Esperance residents and there will be no cost to participate.

Hethey is visiting Esperance from 21st – 25th November to work with community members to plan this project.

For more information about the variety of programs run by ECA contact Jane Mulcock on 9072 1158 or email admin@esperancecommunityarts.org.au.

-ENDS-

For more information or to organise a photo opportunity contact:

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**Esperance Community Arts Space: 67 Dempster Street / PO Box 708 Esperance, WA, 6450
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