

Creatures tell a story

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Kwobadak Maar Exhibition: Artist Cyndy Moody with son Mathew Moody. Picture taken by Angie Roe.

An empty shop window on the east end of Fitzgerald Street has been brought to life with woven creatures and story pieces by the Northam Yorgas social craft group.

The Kwobadak Maar exhibition had its official launch on Friday, displaying a range of woven bush creatures, embroidery and hand-printed pieces.

Each creation was accompanied by personal stories that give insight to local Noongar culture and history. Artists Elaine Dickie, Norma Garlett, Frances Gillespie, Glenda Kickett, Janet Kickett, Yvonne Kickett, Cyndy Moody, Deborah Moody and Sonia Stack contributed woven sculptures embroidery and print work to the exhibition.

Across October and November, Community Arts Network (CAN) in partnership with AVIVO, ran a series of craft and textile workshops with the Northam Yorgas, inviting participants to create a story piece for public display leading to the exhibition.

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Local artist and elder Deborah Moody said that Kwobadak Maar means beautiful or flash hands in Noongar.

"This exhibition brings out the hidden talent of the group," Ms Moody said. The artists celebrated the launch of the exhibition with an afternoon tea, inviting their families to view the work.

Marlee Circle member and elder Kathy Davis said it was great to see the Aboriginal culture celebrated on the main street, especially for the younger generation.

"My great-great-grandson was asking all sorts of questions about the works," she said. The Northam community has been generous in its support of the exhibition with Dr Marie Fox loaning the space, Elders Real Estate organising maintenance and Purslowe Tinetti Funerals lending chairs for the opening. CAN general manager June Moorhouse said the organisation was honoured to have worked with such a creative group of people.

"It's an easily accessible exhibition for the wider community to view the gorgeous works and take in the stories," she said.

"The window, especially lit up at night, has drawn a lot of curious public members. "The evidence of many child-height fingerprints on the glass is a good sign." Kwobadak Maar runs until Tuesday, December 13.