

Media Release

REMIX1 exhibition launch

WHEN: Wednesday 19th of September at 5 pm

WHERE: Fondation Suzanne Bastien Gallery, Pango Rd,

A new exhibition exploring the idea of 'Remix' in contemporary ni-Vanuatu art is opening at Fondation Suzanne Bastien Gallery.

REMIX1 will feature works by local music, visual, dance, performance artists, including Marcel Meltherong, Amelia Lovo, Narsong Taleo, Gina Kaitiplel, Denny Kaio and more.

Asked to explain the idea of Remix, participating artist and co-curator Marcel Meltherong has said,

"If I want to explain Remix, I would say it's like a Yam. Yam is something we have had a long time. But if I use yam to explain Remix, it is like I harvest a yam, but instead of doing the usual thing and making laplap (Vanuatu's national dish), I use it to make a new kind of dish. To present the idea that with the things we are blessed with, like yams, we don't just have to make laplap: we can make all kinds of things."

Daniel Owen, Australian Volunteer at Fondation Suzanne Bastien said "*In the lead up to REMIX1, some participating artists were given access to the Vanuatu Cultural Centre collections and archives to conduct research and respond to what they found by creating contemporary artwork relating to their cultural identity and 'kastom' connections. Works from this program will be shown in the REMIX1 exhibition*"

The REMIX1 exhibition is the first part of a collaborative project between the Australian National University, the Vanuatu Cultural Centre, Further Arts, Foundation Suzanne Bastien, and the Queensland Art Gallery and Gallery of Modern Art. The Remix project aims to explore the pathways and processes that support ni-Vanuatu artists to make contemporary art, drawing on cultural identities and traditional knowledge.

As Delly Roy, Coordinator of the Traditional Entertainment & Kastom Support (TEKS) Unit of Vanuatu arts and media organization Further Arts, a Partner Organisation in the Remix project, has said,

"A main challenge that we face when we go to communities is conflict and sometimes accusations from the people who are keepers of kastom in the village towards contemporary Ni-Vanuatu artists and performers who are based in town, about the use of kastom knowledge and style in contemporary works. On the other hand, the artists and performers who live in town claim that they are using the roots of kastom (stamba blong kastom) and their own talents and expression to

preserve stories and knowledge from the islands, which is a valid point."

The REMIX1 launch will coincide with the Fondation's monthly fundraising event and will feature visual art, music, dance, performance, magic, kakae, kava and drinks. Entry is free and everyone is welcome.

For more information contact Daniel Owen or Lina Ariki T: 24991

Maya Haviland email maya.haviland@anu.edu.au